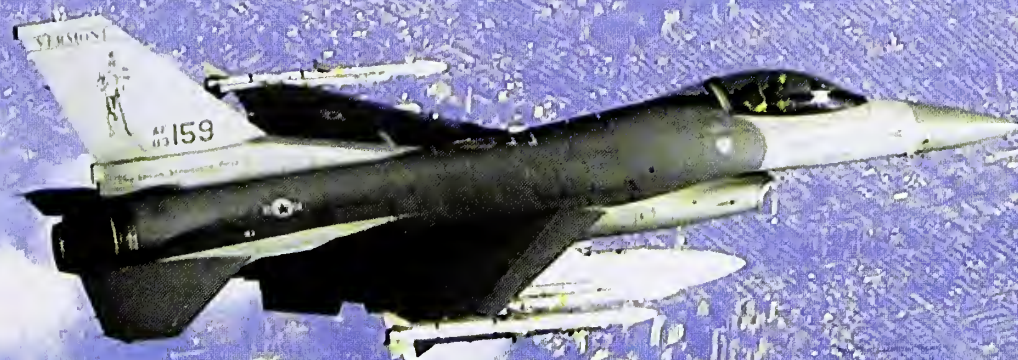




Air National Guard at 60: **A HISTORY**



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COVER: A Vermont Air National Guard F-16 from the 134th Fighter Squadron, 158th Fighter Wing, conducts combat air patrol over the still burning World Trade Center site, September 12, 2001. (Photographer: Lt Col Terry B. Moultroup. 134th Fighter Squadron, 158th Fighter Wing, Vermont Air National Guard. Photo courtesy of Vermont Air National Guard.)

Staff Sergeant Leslie Wuerflein, from the 140th Logistics Squadron's vehicle maintenance section, Colorado Air National Guard, loads bales of hay onto a Wyoming Air National Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft at Pueblo Memorial Airport, Colorado, January 3, 2007, for an emergency feeding mission that will be conducted the following morning. The hay will be dropped near La Junta, to help feed livestock that have been stranded by a snowstorm that has impacted the area. (Photographer: MSgt John Rohrer. U.S. Air Force Photo.)





FOREWORD

Lieutenant General Craig R. McKinley
Director, Air National Guard

The Air National Guard has played significant roles in all of America's wars and most of its major contingencies since the beginning of the 20th century. Governors and citizens alike have looked to the Air Guard for relief and rescue during community and state emergencies. Today's Citizen Airmen epitomize the enthusiasm, adaptability, and innovative spirit of America.

Every day they are called upon to defend the freedoms of our nation and help their fellow citizens in times of crisis. Performing according to the highest professional standards of the Air Force, Air Guard members embody our militia heritage and its volunteer tradition.

For the past 60 years the Air National Guard has served as an invaluable resource for the Air Force and the governors, transitioning seamlessly between federal and state roles. Air National Guard members have served around the world and their military experience and civilian skills have proven invaluable as our nation prosecuted conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. They also served during several major contingencies including the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Berlin Crisis of 1961 to 1962. In addition, Air Guard members made major contributions in a host of other operations in Panama, the Balkans, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and the Iraq no-fly zones instituted after Operation Desert Storm.

In the United States, the Hurricane Katrina relief effort brought into sharp focus the Air Guard's well established role as America's hometown Air Force. The Air National Guard flew over 3,000 sorties, moved over 30,000 passengers, and hauled over 11,000 tons of desperately needed supplies into Gulf Coast airfields, some of which Guard personnel opened

and operated. Air National Guard members rescued 1,443 people—heroically saving people stranded by the flood. At eight sites along the Gulf Coast, Air National Guard medical units treated more than 15,000 patients, combining expert medical care with compassion. Air Guard members, in 2006, joined their Army counterparts in Operation Jump Start, supporting the Border Patrol in strengthening efforts to help stem the flow of illegal immigrants into this nation across its southwestern border with Mexico into the United States. For many years Air Guard members have fought wildfires, combated the influx of prohibited drugs into the United States, and saved countless lives through the daily operations of its search and rescue units. In addition to their primary federal warfighting responsibilities, National Guard aviation units have been performing such missions for civil authorities at least since 1927. That year the governor of Arkansas called out his entire 154th Observation Squadron to use their aircraft to locate stranded survivors and breaks in levees during the great Mississippi River flood.

The Air National Guard's role within the Air Force has matured and changed enormously since its establishment as a separate reserve component September 18, 1947. Originally, the Air Guard was a poorly resourced Mobilization Day fighter force requiring weeks of preparation for its major mission: a

possible war with the Soviet Union. Since then the Air National Guard has evolved into a highly capable organization held in a high state of readiness augmenting the active duty Air Force in a broad spectrum of operational missions around the globe on a daily basis. Beginning with the air defense runway alert experiment in March 1953, the Air Guard assumed what has become known in recent years as an “Operational” role. Simultaneously, the Air National Guard maintained the capability to serve as a “Reserve” force for wars and major contingencies. The defense of the United States is the Air National Guard’s primary responsibility as part of the Total Air Force and the National Military Strategy. At the same time, the governors rely on their Air Guard units to help handle

everything from blizzards and hurricanes to the possibilities of a pandemic flu or another terrorist incident.

The following history, written by Dr. Susan Rosenfeld and Dr. Charles J. Gross of the Air National Guard’s history program, documents key facets of the ANG’s evolution and brings them up to date as the Air National Guard transforms to meet the space and information age and confronts the multiple challenges of terrorism, insurgency, illegal narcotics, humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, conventional warfare, and supports civil authorities. Chief Master Sergeant David P. Anderson’s chapters on Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom in the 2001 to 2004 Air National Guard periodic history contributed invaluable information to this publication. ❧



New Orleans Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base (Alvin Callender Field), Belle Chasse, Louisiana, September 1, 2005. (Gil Cohen, In Katrina's Wake, National Guard Heritage Painting.)

An F-106A Delta Dart from the Golden Bears of California Air National Guard's 144th Fighter Interceptor Wing launched an AIM-2 Genie air to air missile in the 1980 William Tell aerial weapons competition. The Wing won overall top honors. (Photographer: TSgt Frank Garzenick. Air National Guard Collection.)



BUILDING A TOTAL FORCE

Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast on August 29, 2005. "This was, by and large, the worst sight of devastation I've ever seen in my career," Chief Master Sergeant Pat Malone of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, Kentucky Air National Guard (ANG) recalled of his deployment to flooded New Orleans, Louisiana. Chief Malone was among some 40,000 National Guardsmen* who responded. "The sheer magnitude of it and the conditions we had the guys working in were the most devastating." As a

“These guys were selfless ... and they jumped in there and saved people for seven straight days.”

veteran of the first Gulf War and the continuing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, Chief Malone had plenty of experience to compare with his Louisiana assignment. Working with the 125th Special Tactics Squadron (Oregon), the 212th Rescue Squadron (Alaska), 131st Rescue Squadron (California), and the 103rd Rescue Squadron (New York), all ANG, the 123rd used Zodiac boats to rescue over 1,200 people. They also saved 86 people found wading through the waters or trapped in vehicles. “Once you really get the guys in there, they’re in a giant cesspool of contaminated water with anything you can imagine. Anything in anybody’s garage, any chemical under anybody’s sink, the oil industries, the deceased, animals, sewage, everything mixed together,” Chief Malone said. The pararescuemen with Malone were trained “to get into confined, collapsed spaces; conduct search and rescue missions; cut through roofs; cut down doors; and get into places other rescue workers can’t ... These guys were selfless ... and they jumped in there and saved people for seven straight days.”

“The shortest distance between a disaster and humanitarian assistance is an



Kentucky Air National Guardsmen, 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, setting out with Zodiac boats to rescue survivors of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, 2005. (Air Force Photo.) BELOW: A US Air Force C-5 Galaxy, 105th Airlift Wing, New York Air National Guard, Stewart International airport, New York, sits on a ramp at the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center, Mississippi, as airmen with the 137th Airlift Squadron unload the cargo bay full of support vehicles and equipment for Hurricane Katrina relief operations. (Photographer: TSgt Micheal O'Halloran. Air Force Photo.)

Air National Guard C-130,” noted one Guardsman looking back on the ANG’s hurricane missions. During Katrina, Air Guard C-130s ferried in rescuers, medics, and support workers, and carried out the rescued. On September 1, 2005, the 139th Airlift Wing of the Missouri Air National Guard flew 31 New Orleans

children who needed hospitalization on two C-130s into Kansas City for treatment. The Delaware Air National Guard’s 166th Airlift Wing C-130 crews brought Army National Guard members into Jackson, Mississippi, while Nevada’s 152nd Airlift Wing flew Guard medical teams into Baton Rouge. Pave Hawk

*Both men and women in the Air National Guard are referred to as Guardsmen.



rescue helicopters dropped in rescue teams like Chief Malone's. Louisiana Air National Guard's 122nd Air Support Operations Squadron had trained to call in air strikes; after Katrina, they used those same skills to direct rescuers.

First responder-type search and rescue is only one of the many roles played by the men and women of the

their localities and Air Force media. Yet, in the United States, the ANG has primary responsibility for the aerial defense of the United States as well as assisting civil authorities to deal with natural disasters. In addition, the Air Guard provides almost half of the Air Force's tactical airlift support, combat communications, aeromedical evacuations, and aerial re-

fueling. In August 2007

it consisted of 13,158 full time Guardsmen and 69,901 traditional Guardsmen who take on that role one weekend a month plus two weeks a year. Technicians occupy a special category. They are considered traditional Guardsmen serving drill weekends and their annual training, but the rest of the time they have civil service status doing the same work as their Guard responsibilities. In August 2007 the ANG had 22,833 technicians. Guardsmen could serve in one of three capacities when involved in operations. Normally, they reported to the state governors, and the state paid for the operation (State Active Duty). They

could also report to the governor, and the federal government financed the operation under Title 32

of the United States Code (USC), or they could be federalized by the president or Congress under Title 10 of the USC.

Major General Winston P. "Wimpy" Wilson, one of the most important officers in Air National Guard history, and the first from the ANG to head the National Guard Bureau, contributed an

insight in the early 1960s that took on even more significance as the Air Guard accepted increased responsibilities in the post-Cold War military. Because Guard personnel often had previous active duty training and held civilian jobs comparable to their military duties, and because of their longevity in individual units, the ANG could maintain high levels of military proficiency with far less training time than their active duty counterparts.

The National Guard Bureau had responsibility for administrative matters pertaining to the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard, their operation under unified command, and their integration into combat-ready teams of land and air forces with the Army and Air Force respectively. Unlike their active duty counterparts in the Air Force, most Air National Guard members were long-time residents of the communities they served, with traditional Guardsmen holding a variety of positions including teachers, firefighters, police, dentists, accountants, and small business owners. Because of its strong community ties, the Air National Guard was able to command influential congressional support. Moreover, for most of its responsibilities, the Guard reported to the governor of its state or territory.* Those ties gave the Guard substantial political clout.

Historically, the Air National Guard sought to insure that it remained a viable organization relevant to Air Force requirements by acquiring the most advanced aircraft and ground equipment available and integrating them into a broad spectrum of missions that the ANG shared with the active force. Although the Air Guard seldom acquired brand new aircraft straight from the factory, it usually had been able to maintain the operational capabilities of its planes and helicopters through superior maintenance, high levels



Major General Winston P. "Wimpy" Wilson (left) being sworn in as Chief, National Guard Bureau, by Secretary of the Air Force Eugene M. Zuckert during ceremonies held at Air Force Headquarters, September 4, 1963. (Air Force Photo.)

Air National Guard. Today they carry more responsibilities in the military than at any time in the Air Guard's 60-year history. And like the rescues it conducted in Katrina, its heroic actions as well as in its less spectacular but essential support roles, the Air Guard's achievements were rarely touted outside

* The exception is the District of Columbia, where the president of the United States is its head.

of aircrew experience, rigorous training and realistic exercises, and innovative modernization programs.

The Early Days of National Guard Aviation

The late afternoon shadows lengthened as the sun dropped toward the western horizon over the shell-scarred French landscape. A flight of Royal Air Force (RAF) SE-5s patrolling at 16,000 feet turned south toward their home base at Bruay. Reed G. Landis, the lone American in the formation, “hunched forward in the tiny cockpit and searched the scattered puffs of clouds ahead ... suddenly Landis saw the flight leader rock his wings vigorously and roll into a steep dive ... Approximately 1,000 feet below, a half-dozen Pfalz [F.A.] scouts were cruising east.” According to Landis’s combat report, he “followed the flight down on F.A. scouts, majority of which spun. Continued to dive after the F.A. and engaged one as it came out of a spin. Fired short bursts from both guns into F.A., which did several turns of a spin and then fell into a dive.” Landis, a former Illinois Guardsman who volunteered for aviation duty, scored his first official kill. He went on to become one of America’s leading aces in World War I with ten aerial victories. (An ace had to have at least five confirmed aerial victories.) He was one of four former Guardsmen to achieve the coveted status of ace in that conflict. Their spectacular individual achievements underscored that, despite little interest from either the states or federal government, the Guard had been a hotbed of interest in American military aviation during its early days.

Although the ANG was not officially established in law as a separate reserve component until September 18, 1947, National Guard aviation emerged before



A Galludet Tractor biplane which the New York National Guard aviators rented in 1915. (Air National Guard Photo Collection.)

World War I. Early Guard aviation was a product of grassroots efforts. In August 1908 the Army formally accepted the world’s first military airplane from the Wright brothers. Meanwhile, that April, a group of enthusiasts organized an “aeronautical corps” at the Park Avenue Armory in New York City to learn ballooning. They were members of the 1st Company, Signal Corps, New York National Guard. Although they received instruction and assembled a balloon, it was not clear whether members of the unit had ever actually ascended in it.

In 1910 the unit raised \$500 to finance its first aircraft. The investment crashed along with the plane on its initial takeoff during maneuvers that same year. However, the following year, the Curtiss Aeroplane Company loaned the New York Guardsmen an aircraft and pilot Beckwith Havens. When Havens later joined the unit as a private, he became the National Guard’s first aviator. In August 1912 he flew with the Army in joint maneuvers:

Prior to World War I civilian flyers, businessmen, and National Guardsmen attempted to form Guard aero units in various states. On November 1, 1915, more than a year after the war in Europe

began, Captain Raynal Cawthorne Bolling, a prominent New York attorney, organized the Aviation Detachment, First Battalion, Signal Corps of the New York National Guard. That marked the Guard’s first genuine aviation unit. Subsequently, the organization was redesignated the First Aero Company. Located at Mineola, Long Island, the unit was formed June 22, 1916, and was called into federal service on July 13, 1916, when the Mexican revolution spilled over the border into the United States. However, instead of active service in the southwest, it remained at Mineola for training and was demobilized on November 2, 1916.

The failed call-up convinced Captain Bolling that National Guard aviation units could never be effective military organizations. Aside from the difficulty of obtaining funds and spare parts, Bolling saw the main problem as the inability to recruit expert mechanics into the National Guard. Instead his unit had to rely entirely on paid civilians to maintain its aircraft. Both Bolling and the acting chief of the Militia Bureau, a regular Army officer, were convinced that military aviation could only be developed under the auspices of the active force. Consequently, the

War Department decided Guard aviation units would not be mobilized during World War I (April 1917 to November 1918 for the United States). Instead the War Department disbanded them and individual Guardsmen were encouraged to volunteer for active duty.

Nevertheless, when President Woodrow Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war in April 1917, Guardsmen provided a major pool of aviators for the Army. Approximately 100 of them had either qualified as pilots or were in training to become military aviators. Under War Department policy they had to leave the Guard and volunteer for the Signal Corps Reserve if they wished to remain in aviation during the war.

Although no reliable comprehensive figures exist on how many Guardsmen actually served in the U.S. aviation program during World War I, they made significant contributions as individual volunteers. The most famous of the Guard's four aces was Major Reed Chambers who was credited with six aerial victories. He joined the Tennessee Guard in 1914 and served on the Mexican border in 1916 before becoming an original member of the famed 94th Pursuit Squadron in France. On April 14, 1918, Chambers flew with Captain Eddie Rickenbacker on the first combat mission ever ordered by an American commander of a U.S. Army squadron of American pilots.

Second Lieutenant Erwin R. Bleckley, a field artilleryman from the Kansas National Guard, volunteered for aviation duty after he reached France. On October 5, 1918, members of the squadron attempted to locate and resupply an American infantry battalion that had been cut off by the Germans in the Argonne Forest. The following day, Bleckley and his pilot, First Lieutenant Harold E. Goettler (a non-Guardsman), braved very poor weather and intense



Captain Charles A. Lindbergh, Missouri National Guard, and members of his National Guard unit, 110th Observation Squadron, after he flew solo across the Atlantic Ocean, 1927. (Courtesy of 131st Fighter Wing, Missouri Air National Guard.)

ground fire to drop supplies to the "lost battalion." But flying at an altitude of 200 feet, their aircraft was downed by enemy rifle and machine gun fire. Both Bleckley and Goettler received the Medal of Honor posthumously for their heroism. Bleckley was the first of three National Guard aviators to be awarded the nation's highest military decoration.

Initially, the War Department and the Army Air Service had no intention of organizing aviation units in the postwar National Guard. However, some Guardsmen and their political allies such as congressmen and governors had developed an intense interest in flying. Responding to political pressure and the availability of surplus wartime aircraft, the War Department changed its position. Early in 1920 the Militia Bureau and the Air Service agreed on a plan for organizing National Guard aviation units. On January 17, 1921, the 109th Observation Squadron of the Minnesota National Guard became the first postwar air unit to receive federal recognition. Many World War I

veterans and other talented fliers joined postwar Guard aviation units. During the interwar period, 29 observation squadrons were established. They were either integral elements of National Guard infantry divisions or assigned to Army corps aviation.

The National Guard's observation responsibilities directly supported ground troops by looking for the enemy and helping direct artillery fire. An aviator in the 110th Observation Squadron of the Missouri National Guard became the most famous Guard pilot during the interwar period: Captain Charles A. Lindbergh. His service illustrated the close ties between military and commercial aviation. Trained to fly by the Army, he joined the 110th Observation Squadron in November 1925. The following year, he became chief pilot for an airmail venture started by fellow 110th pilots Major William Robertson and his brother Frank. After Lindbergh made his historic solo trans-Atlantic flight in May 1927, he recalled his service in the Guard fondly. He wrote that his fellow

pilots “joined the Guard for two reasons that still hold up: first, the opportunity it offered to keep in flying training, and second, they considered it a patriotic duty to keep fit for immediate service in the case of a wartime emergency.”

However, in the pre-World War II period, Guard aviators also honored the citizen soldier tradition by assisting civil authorities in domestic emergencies, most notably during the devastating Mississippi River flood of April and May 1927. Arkansas Governor John Martineau called up the 154th Observation Squadron, Arkansas National Guard, which flew over 20,000 miles across their state saving

them up. Once the storm arrived they flew their single-engine biplane Curtiss Jennies low in driving rain to airdrop supplies to families marooned in trees and on rooftops, and guided rescue boats to stranded people.

By the late 1920s the Guard’s observation mission in direct support of ground troops became increasingly marginalized in the opinion of Air Corps officers. Changing doctrine and revolutionary advances in aeronautical technology drove the Army’s air arm to concentrate increasingly more of its resources on the strategic bombardment mission. As a consequence of that shift, during the 1930s, the Air Corps turned over almost all of its responsibility for observation aviation to the Guard. That pattern of shifting all or major portions of less important missions from the regulars to the Guard (and later the Reserves) persisted through the remainder of the 20th century.

Guard Aviation in World War II

In 1940 National Guard observation squadrons were mobilized as non-divisional formations and absorbed into the Army Air Forces. Approximately 4,800 National Guard aviation personnel were called up. While the majority of their units retained their numerical designations, most lost their character as Guard organizations. The rapidly expanding Army Air Forces used a majority of the key Guard members to help organize and train the multitude of volunteers that flooded into the wartime service. Some like Lieutenant Colonel Addison Baker of the Ohio National Guard achieved important combat leadership positions during the war. Baker died while commanding the 93rd Heavy Bombardment Group

during the ill-fated raid against enemy oil refineries at Ploiesti, Romania, on August 1, 1943. He received the Medal of Honor posthumously for his courage and leadership that day.

The Air National Guard is Born

The Air National Guard as we know it today—a separate reserve component of the Air Force—was a product of the politics of postwar planning and inter-service rivalry during World War II (December 1941 to August 1945 for the United States). The leaders who planned and maneuvered for an independent postwar Air Force during World War II had little confidence in the reserves, especially the state-dominated National Guard. On the contrary, those leaders expected to build the largest and most modern standing force possible. However, domestic politics and American history forced them to significantly alter their plans.

Determined to include the National Guard in the postwar U.S. military establishment during World War II, the National Guard Association of the United States flexed its considerable political muscle. It compelled the Army Air Forces (AAF) to plan for a significant dual-component reserve force including an Air National Guard once the overseas fighting ended. General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, also pressured the AAF to revise its ambitious plans for a large postwar active duty force. When President Harry S. Truman instituted dramatic postwar military budget cuts, he split defense dollars evenly among the Army, Navy, and Air Force. That move also required the Air Force to plan for a far smaller active duty service than it had envisaged. As a result, the Air Force



Retired Colorado Air Guard Technical Sergeant Harry Emily, 90. He joined the National Guard in 1938 and was discharged after World War II. He recalled that there were 17 members in 1946 when they reorganized the 120th Aero Observation Squadron into the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron which flew P-51 Mustang fighters, 2007. (Photographer: Spc Jessica Stone, Colorado National Guard. Air Force Photo.)

thousands of lives. Even before the floods reached their state, 60 members of the 154th pointed out potential breaks in the levees and airdropped food, medicine, and supplies to the workers shoring

needed the reserve components to help fill the gap.

Against the best professional judgment of the Air Force leadership, the Air Force of the mid-to-late 1940s included the 58,000 members of what became the Air National Guard. Its primary units were 84 flying squadrons, mostly fighters with air defense of the continental United States as their main mission. In 1946, as individual units began obtaining federal recognition, a separate Air Guard began to emerge. September 18, 1947, however, is considered the ANG's official birth

date, the same day the Air Force became a separate service under the National Security Act of that year.

The Korean War and After

The Korean War (June 1950 to July 1953) was a turning point for the U.S. military establishment including the Air National Guard. Some 45,000 Air Guardsmen, 80 percent of the force, were mobilized. That call-up exposed the glaring weaknesses of the ANG as well as the rest of the American military

establishment. After World War II, the Guard developed a reputation as a glorified flying club for World War II combat veterans. Not only did units and individuals lack specific wartime missions, their equipment, especially aircraft, was obsolete and their training, usually deplorable. Once mobilized, those Guardsmen proved to be almost totally unprepared for combat. Regardless of their previous training and equipment, Guard units were assigned almost at random to major air commands. It took months and months for ANG units



to become combat ready; some units never succeeded.

While most Air National Guard enlisted members remained with their units during the Korean War, many key officers, especially pilots, were stripped away from their units and used as fillers elsewhere in the rapidly expanding Air Force. Eventually, the mess was sorted out. The recalled Guardsmen contributed substantially to the air war in Korea and to the Air Force's global buildup for an expected military confrontation with the Soviet Union.

In fact six ANG fighter squadrons and numerous individual Guard pilots serving in Air Force units compiled excellent combat records in Korea. They flew more than 39,000 combat sorties and destroyed 39 enemy aircraft. Four Guardsmen became aces. However, the initial mobilization fiasco forced the Air Force to achieve an accommodation with the Air Guard and to thoroughly revamp its entire reserve system.

Although flying units garnered most of the attention during the Korean War, 11,000 of the 45,000 mobilized Air

Guardsmen belonged to the organization's aircraft control and warning as well as its radar calibration units. Their organizations either strengthened American air defenses or were converted to tactical air control units that directed Air Force fighter aircraft in the continental United States, Alaska, Newfoundland, Europe, and French Morocco.

During and after the conflict in Korea, Congress played a key role in placing reserve programs on a sound footing. Congress was much more willing than either the Department of Defense or



Beginning on March 1, 1953, two Air National Guard units—the 138th Fighter Interceptor Squadron from Syracuse, New York, pictured here, and the 194th Fighter Bomber Squadron from Hayward, California—each placed two F-51D fighters and five pilots on air defense “runway alert” from one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset. The runway alert program was the first broad effort to integrate reserve forces into a major Air Force operational mission on a volunteer basis during peacetime. (Gil Cohen, Runway Alert, National Guard Heritage Painting.)



Captain John McMahn and Sergeant White, of the 182nd Fighter Bomb Squadron, Texas Air National Guard, close out flight records at Taegu, South Korea, following their F-84E becoming the first such aircraft to complete 1,000 flying hours, 1952. (Air Force Photo.)

the military services to fund the reserves properly. Moreover, beginning with the passage of the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952, a series of key laws fostered the development of more effective reserve components.

Although Korean War hostilities ended in July 1953, the Cold War persisted. Georgia Air Guard Major General George G. Finch, former Air Division chief at the National Guard Bureau, wanted to find an innovative way to provide additional training for fighter pilots after their units were demobilized. At the same time, the Air Defense Command could not call upon sufficient active duty Air Force units to defend the continental United States against the Soviet air threat. General

Finch proposed to employ pilots full time from “strategically placed” Air Guard units to perform “air intercept missions” against unidentified aircraft entering U.S. air space. In addition they would “provide simulated fighter attacks against the Strategic Air Command’s [SAC’s] nuclear-capable bombers.”

Using Air Guardsmen from the 138th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Syracuse, New York, and the 194th Fighter Bomber Squadron, Hayward, California, the experiment, which began on March 1, 1953, proved a great success—except that it had to remain a secret at least for the time being. Brigadier General Curtis J. Irwin, the 138th commander, later recalled trying to obtain the services of his pilots from

their civilian employers but not being able to tell them why. “But with Cold War tensions remaining high, employers were eager to help.”

In August and October 1954 eight and nine fighter interceptor squadrons respectively began “standing alert” using volunteer aircrews on a rotating basis for 14 hours a day. The ANG runway alert program required some planes and pilots to be available around-the-clock to become airborne within minutes of being notified to scramble. At its peak, in the mid-1950s, all 70 Air Guard fighter squadrons participated in that program, although that number was reduced to 25 by 1961. Most of the runway alert exercises involved SAC bombers; the few actual scrambles turned out to be late or off-course commercial airliners. The runway alert experiment in 1953 marked the beginning of the Air Guard’s modern homeland defense role. Moreover, it was the first broad effort to integrate reserve units into a major Air Force combat mission in peacetime on a continuing basis using volunteers.

Because of problems associated with the Korean War mobilizations, the Air Force and its reserve components pioneered new approaches like the runway alert program to reserve training and management. The Air Guard received support for its innovations from its strong political base in the states and Congress. More significantly, key Air Force and Air National Guard leaders agreed to put their past differences behind them to build on increasingly effective reserve programs. The Air National Guard had a creative and politically savvy leader in General Wilson, then head of the ANG organization in the National Guard Bureau. Mobilized from Arkansas in 1950 for the Korean War, he expected to serve in Washington, DC, for 21 months. Instead he remained for 21 years. Wilson

served as head of the Air National Guard from 1954 to 1962. In 1963, he became the first Air Guardsman to serve as Chief of the National Guard Bureau, staying in that position until 1971. Under Wilson's leadership, the ANG transformed from a flying club to a valued reserve component of the Air Force.

General Wilson and others recognized that the Air Guard faced a dim future unless it acquired definite wartime missions and integrated with Air Force operations on a regular basis while meeting the same tough training standards as the active duty force. To be ready for combat the moment it was called into federal service, the Air Guard also needed more full-time manning and additional training periods for its aviators. Finally, General Wilson and others fought hard to acquire modern aircraft and facilities. General Wilson emphasized the high experience level found among Air Guard individuals and units and convinced the Air National Guard, the Air Force, Congress, and the states to accept those concepts.

Pushed by its Air Guard and Reserve and their political supporters, the Air Force adopted several management and training innovations after the Korean War

first time. The ANG now began to train against those requirements and plans. Guard leaders proposed the air defense runway alert program as a way to combine realistic training with support of a significant combat mission in peacetime. As the first broad effort to integrate reserve units into the regular peacetime operating structure of the American armed forces on a continuing basis, that program was the precursor to the Air Force's total force approach to reserve components' training and utilization.

Another significant innovation—the gaining command concept of reserve forces management—meant that the major air command responsible for using a Guard or Reserve unit in wartime would actually train it during peacetime. Air National Guard leaders had pressed for that arrangement for years. In 1960 budget cuts and criticism of the air reserve programs forced the active duty Air Force to adopt the concept. It improved the effectiveness of ANG units by giving Air Force commanders direct personal incentives for improving the performance of those organizations. In addition, it established firm precedents for the total force policy

to be prepared to respond within a few days once they were recalled to active duty. To support flexible response and improve readiness, Secretary McNamara proposed shrinking America's large reserve establishment and merging the National Guard with the purely federal reserve components. Such efforts had been tried several times since World War II, always failing. It failed again in the early 1960s. The secretary then created a selected reserve force in each of the military services. Those units had priority access to equipment, could recruit to full wartime strength, and were allowed to conduct additional training each year. They would provide most of the nation's strategic military reserve in the United States while a growing share of the active force was engaged in the Vietnam War.

Reshaping the Air National Guard Force Structure

Originally the Air National Guard was designed as a combat reserve force. After World War II, its flying units consisted of 72 fighter and 12 light bomber squadrons equipped with obsolescent

ANG transformed from a flying club to a valued reserve component of the Air Force.

that promoted the evolution of combat-ready reserve forces. The most significant policy innovations included placing those air reserve forces in war plans, the ANG's participation in the air defense runway alert program, the “gaining command concept” of reserve forces management, and the selected reserve force program.

In 1951 the Air Force established specific mobilization requirements for the Air Guard in its war plans for the

by integrating the Air Guard into the daily operations of the active force.

The selected reserve force program—another major policy innovation—reflected then Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara's determination to build an elite force of highly capable reserve units to support the John F. Kennedy administration's flexible response policy. That policy expected America's military forces, including its reserve components,

World War II propeller-driven aircraft while the Air Force transitioned to jet fighters. Although it had no airlift or tanker units, the Guard's flying units were equipped with a small number of liaison, trainer, and transport planes. To preserve its flying units the Air Guard actively sought out new missions and aircraft for them including transports and tankers, a practice that still persists.

After the Korean War, the Air National Guard's force structure gradually changed to include a significant number of airlift, tanker, and specialized combat-support units. The Air Guard aggressively worked to preserve its existing flying units by obtaining the most modern aircraft available. Those included growing numbers of large aircraft used in special operations, aeromedical transport, strategic and tactical airlift, and aerial refueling missions. Although those planes were usually older models no longer needed by the active force, they were gradually integrated into the service's daily operations by the Air National Guard as either a by-product of training needs or in response to specific emergencies.

The Air Guard found prop-driven transports important at that time for several reasons. Some existing Air National Guard fighter units equipped with piston-driven F-51s could not convert to jets because the runways at the local airports where they were based were too short. In addition, some local leaders simply did not want jet fighters operating in their communities. Guardsmen and the affected communities, however, were determined not to lose those units. Korean War operations suggested that experience and maturity were the keys to victory in jet combat. Nevertheless, the Air Guard believed that only relatively young men were capable of performing well in modern fighters. The Guard considered airlift a viable option for keeping senior aviators in the cockpit. Finally, with the advent of surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), some observers concluded that the days of fighter units were numbered.

With the end of World War II the Air Force dropped special operations units from its rolls. "Special Operations Forces are small, elite military units with special training and equipment that can

infiltrate into hostile territory through land, sea, or air to conduct a variety of operations, many of them classified. The personnel undergo rigorous selection and lengthy, specialized training." They were revived for the Korean War. After that conflict, in 1954, the Air Force, preoccupied with its high technology buildup for a possible global nuclear war with the Soviet Union, planned to phase out its remaining special operations units. General Wilson and governors in four states agreed to establish new units the Air Force was no longer interested in assisting. Consequently, in April 1955, the Air Guard acquired its first

Squadron (Light) became the first pure airlift unit in the Air Guard on February 1, 1956. It received Curtiss C-46D Commandos. Two other aeromedical transport squadrons followed that year, primarily because of the impracticality of converting their locations to modern jet fighter operations.

Three years later, General Wilson learned that the Air Force, in order to save operating funds, planned to phase out 48 C-97 Stratofreighters before their replacements were available to the active force. Wilson proposed sending those planes to ANG fighter-interceptor squadrons and Air Force Secretary



F-104A from the 157th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, South Carolina Air National Guard, is loaded aboard a C-124 for shipment to Europe during the Berlin crisis, 1961. (Office of Air Force History, USAF)

special operations unit when the 129th Air Resupply Squadron was federally recognized and two C-46s were delivered to it at Hayward, California.

Encouraged by Guardsmen and their political allies, during the late 1950s, the Air Force allowed several other Air National Guard units to trade in their aging fighters for old transports. New Jersey's newly organized 150th Aeromedical Transport

James H. Douglas, an airlift officer in World War II, approved the proposal. In January 1960, units in California, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, and Oklahoma began trading in their fighters for C-97s.

Air National Guard leaders were determined to further expand the ANG's role in key Air Force missions. In 1960 they convinced the National Guard

Association of the United States that “Broadening the Air National Guard missions is essential.” To limit Guard missions to a small number of defense requirements made units vulnerable to program changes. “A well-balanced Air National Guard with missions in all areas of the defense requirements, is a sound goal.” As a result, the Air Guard also took on an air refueling mission. The Air Guard received its first KC-97 aerial tankers in July and August 1961. During that period the 108th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Illinois; 126th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Wisconsin; and 145th Air Transport Squadron, Ohio, converted to KC-97Fs and were redesignated air refueling squadrons. The Guard’s desire to preserve all of its existing flying units with the most modern aircraft available encouraged a significant number of conversions to tanker and strategic airlift aircraft during the remainder of the 1960s.

Cold Warriors

On August 13, 1961, Berliners woke up to find they lived in a divided city. A wall now separated East Berlin from West Berlin. With that provocative act, the Soviet Union ratcheted up the Cold War. President Kennedy mobilized a limited number of Reserve and Guard units, dispatching 11 ANG fighter squadrons to Europe. All the Guard units were in place within a month of their respective mobilization days, although they required additional training, equipment, and personnel after being called up. In all, some 21,000 Air Guardsmen were mobilized during the 1961 Berlin Crisis.

Reliance on second-rate equipment and primitive living conditions during the Berlin call-ups continued to plague the Air Guard units deployed to western Europe. To ameliorate the problems



Ground crew prepares an F-100 of Colorado’s 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron for combat mission at Phan Rang Air Base, South Vietnam. (Air National Guard Collection.)

revealed during that mobilization, in February 1963, the Air Force formally proclaimed the policy goal of having the air reserve components immediately available to augment the active force to a spectrum of conflicts including guerrilla and limited conventional warfare. Both the ANG and the Air Force Reserve also received increased resources. Nevertheless, not until the 1980s did their units secure adequate equipment and training to become deployable quickly for global wartime tasking on an across-the-board basis.

By August 1962 the units mobilized for the Berlin Crisis returned to state control. They had hardly resumed normal operations when President Kennedy announced on October 22, 1962, that the Soviet Union had placed nuclear warheads in Cuba, only 90 miles from Florida. With the Cuban Missile Crisis, Air National Guard fighter units trained for “no notice” deployments, and volunteer ANG airlift crews and their aircraft augmented Air Force global airlift operations. Air National Guard bases

hosted Air Force fighters and bombers dispersed there to avoid a possible Soviet nuclear response to the crisis. But in the end, no ANG unit was federalized.

Gradually, the Guard’s airlift and tanker units became involved in the daily operations of the active force as part of their training. From January through December 1963, for the first time for an air reserve component Air National Guard tactical flying units began routinely deploying overseas during their annual training periods, primarily to Europe, to exercise their wartime missions. Air National Guard transport units hauled cargo for the Military Air Transport Service while training for their wartime global airlift role.

The 1960s also saw the inauguration of a major refueling operation, Creek Party, which flourished almost daily from 1967 to 1977. The Texas Air Guard’s 136th Air Refueling Wing inaugurated Operation Creek Party May 1, 1967, because the Air Force did not have enough tankers available in Europe to train its fighter pilots.

The operation eventually involved nine ANG air refueling groups that rotated approximately every two weeks to Rhein-Main Air Force Base in Germany. During those years, the Air Force tankers in Europe primarily supported the Vietnam War and the demands of the Strategic Air Command, which carried nuclear bombs. Both volunteers and Guardsmen on their annual training participated. A permanent commander and a small detachment of enlisted personnel stayed there full time to serve as liaison with the active duty Air Force and provide continuity. Operation Creek Party demonstrated that the Air Guard could sustain an overseas rotation without necessitating a mobilization by the president or Congress. In addition, it established a pattern for future overseas operational rotations using volunteers on short tours.

The Vietnam War provided the next significant test for the Air Guard. However, for largely domestic political reasons, President Lyndon B. Johnson chose not to mobilize most of the nation's reserve forces. The senior leadership of both the active duty military establishment and the reserve forces tried in vain to reverse the president's decision to avoid a major reserve mobilization. As a result, the Reserves and the Guard acquired reputations as havens for relatively affluent, young white men to avoid the draft.

Following the 1968 Tet offensive in which the Communist North Vietnamese and Vietcong troops attacked positions throughout the Republic of Vietnam, the Pentagon dispatched four ANG fighter squadrons to that nation. According to the Chief of the National Guard's annual report for that year, "All four Guard squadrons in South Vietnam had convinced everyone—particularly the Vietcong—that they were highly qualified professionals with a zest and enthusiasm equal to any in Vietnam." That year

approximately 10,600 Air Guardsmen were called into federal service.

Just prior to Tet, the North Koreans seized the electronics surveillance ship *Pueblo* as it cruised near the Korean coast. President Johnson, contending with Vietnam, sought a diplomatic resolution to that crisis. However, he sent Air Force tactical aircraft to South

active duty force. In practical terms, the total force policy sought to insure that all policymaking, planning, programming, and budgetary activities within Defense considered active and reserve forces concurrently and determined the most efficient mix of those forces in terms of costs versus contributions to national security. The policy also insured that

"All four Guard squadrons in South Vietnam had convinced everyone—particularly the Vietcong—that they were highly qualified professionals with a zest and enthusiasm equal to any in Vietnam."

Korea and mobilized air and naval reservists. That crisis prompted the third partial Air Guard mobilization since the end of World War II and eventually two ANG fighter squadrons were dispatched to South Korea. However, the *Pueblo* crisis ended without a resort to combat.

The Total Force

Based largely on the Air Force's experience with its own reserve components, the Pentagon adopted the total force concept in 1970. Dr. Theodore Marrs, an enthusiastic former Air Guardsman who served as a high ranking civilian official in the Air Force and the Department of Defense in the early 1970s, received much of the credit for developing it. Reserve forces planning and policymaking were influenced by total force ever since. The concept sought to strengthen and rebuild public confidence in the reserves while saving money by reducing the size of the

Reservists and Guardsmen, not draftees or volunteers, would be the first and primary source of manpower to augment the active duty forces in any future crisis.

During the early 1970s necessity forced Air Guardsmen to scramble for other aircraft and more viable missions while managing, with congressional help, to scuttle the proposed deactivations of several ANG units. Because of force structure reductions, a significant number of older C-130 Hercules tactical airlifters became available for the Guard and Reserve. In April 1970 California's 115th Tactical Airlift Squadron acquired C-130As, becoming the first ANG unit to be equipped with that aircraft. Nevertheless, Guard leaders fought hard but failed to retain the strategic airlift mission. That situation caused members of the National Guard Association Executive Council to publicly question whether or not the active force really accepted it as a full

partner under the auspices of the total force concept.

Congress eventually came to the aid of the Guard's hard-pressed airlift community. In June 1979 the 137th Tactical Airlift Wing, Oklahoma, marked the first time an ANG airlift unit was equipped with brand new transport aircraft: it received four factory-fresh C-130Hs. Several years later Congress institutionalized the practice of purchasing limited amounts of new weapons and equipment for the reserve components. Under the auspices of a separate appropriation for Guard and Reserve equipment established in 1982, 69 brand new C-130s entered the ANG's inventory from 1984 to 1991.

Air Force opposition to giving the Guard and Reserve jet tankers changed in the early 1970s because of technological progress and post-Vietnam defense budget cuts, transforming the Guard's role in air refueling. In July 1972 Air Guard units began supporting Air Force tanker task forces overseas with planes and volunteer crews when needed. Triggered by a 1974 decision by Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger to save money, Ohio's 145th Air Refueling Squadron acquired the ANG's first jet tanker in April 1975 when it began converting from KC-97Ls to KC-135As. Altogether, the Air Force transferred 128 older KC-135s to the air reserve components. Lieutenant General Richard L. Lawson, the Eighth Air Force commander and one of the former opponents of giving the Guard tankers, observed in 1977: "There is no such a thing as a 'weekend warrior' in my judgment ... aircrews from Guard units ... are standing ... shoulder-to-shoulder, same facilities, same ground rules, same requirements as their active duty counterparts."

In 1973 President Richard M. Nixon instituted the all-volunteer military. Without the draft, the need to secure



U.S. Air Force Airman Paula Toay (left) the first female unit member assigned to the North Dakota Air National Guard, gets help with her 5.56 mm M16A1 rifle, from Air National Guard instructors during a marksmanship course at Hector Field, North Dakota. (U.S. Air Force Photo.)

additional sources of manpower became apparent. That produced two major social transformations in the National Guard: it became a racially integrated organization and women joined in significantly greater numbers. As late as June 30, 1971, the Air Guard had only 888 African Americans (1.01 percent) and 1,456 other minorities (1.66 percent) in its ranks. It faced a daunting challenge augmenting minorities first, because of the Guard's established emphasis on obtaining trained prior service veterans. Second with pressure to produce diversity throughout the American workforce, the Guard competed with other military services and the private sector for minority recruits who possessed high levels of education and advanced technical skills. As a result ANG experienced a comparative dearth of qualified applicants. However, the new emphasis on recruiting underserved populations brought total ANG minority

membership to 12,856 personnel (13.8 percent) by September 30, 1979.

The Air Guard experienced its second major social transformation regarding women. Less than one percent of the Air Guard consisted of women when the draft ended. Moreover, women had been excluded completely from the Air National Guard until 1956 when President Eisenhower authorized the appointment of female nurses. In October 1956 Captain Norma Parsons Erb became the first female to join the National Guard. That month she entered the New York ANG as a nurse and rose to the rank of colonel before retiring in 1986. However, women could not enter the Air Guard in non-nursing fields until November 1967 when Congress removed a two percent personnel strength and rank ceiling limitations imposed by the Women's Armed Services Act of 1948. Consequently, on July 1, 1968, the



The pilot of a 157th Tactical Fighter Squadron F-16A Fighting Falcon aircraft of the South Carolina Air National Guard prepares for a mission with the help of two ground crewmen. The 157th is one of several squadrons combined to form the 4th Tactical Fighter Wing (Provisional) during Operation Desert Storm. (Air Force Collection.)

National Guard Bureau authorized the states to enlist and appoint women to nonmedical positions.

The Air Force finally admitted women to flight training in 1976. In January 1978 the Air Guard claimed its first female pilot when Second Lieutenant Marilyn Koon pinned on her silver wings and joined Arizona's 161st Aerial Refueling Group. In April 1992 Colonel Roberta V. Mills of the Tennessee ANG became the first Air Guard assistant to the head of the Air Force Nurse Corps. On April 8, 1992, she became the first woman ever promoted to general officer rank in the National Guard. In the mid-

1980s, women were flying every type of Air Force aircraft. By spring 1986, the Air Guard had 12,551 women (11.4 percent) and minority representation had increased to 16,130 (14.6 percent).

During the 1980s changes in the Air Guard's force structure and readiness were primarily driven by President Ronald Reagan's military buildup and the need to prepare for a possible war between the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact in Central Europe. The ANG focused on modernization, more realistic combat training, increased readiness, and personnel growth, primarily in

nonflying, missionsupport units. However, grassroots efforts by the states to increase the number of ANG flying units were rejected by the National Guard Bureau. Instead many units were allowed to increase the number of aircraft assigned to them when the Air Force made those planes available. The expiration of the Soviet Union, beginning with the fall of the Berlin Wall and Glasnost in 1989 and culminating in the USSR's breakup into its republics in 1991, constituted a major upheaval that continued to influence global politics into the 21st century.

Under President George H. W. Bush the United States once again engaged in combat with the support of the Air National Guard. In December 1989 and January 1990, ANG volunteers participated in Operation Just Cause, the invasion of Panama, to secure the arrest of Panamanian dictator and accused drug lord Manuel Noriega. The ANG had been conducting operations in Latin America since the late 1970s to defend the Panama Canal and to provide training support, embassy resupply, search and rescue, and counterdrug operations. In addition the ANG airlifted supplies and hardware to remote radar sites and performed aerial mapping operations. Crews already in Panama also participated in Just Cause. Air National Guard volunteer C-130 crews completed 181 sorties moving 3,107 passengers and 551.3 tons of cargo for Just Cause. Mississippi's C-141-equipped 172nd and C-5-equipped 105th Airlift Wing from New York also contributed. In addition, Air Guard A-7 Corsair II fighters from South Dakota's 114th Tactical Fighter Group and Ohio's 180th Tactical Fighter Group flew 34 combat missions in support of the invasion.

Belying Air Force doubts about Air Guard performance, and applying the same standards as active duty units, Air Guard units succeeded during operational

readiness inspections. In Air Force-wide competitions, Guard units and individuals frequently placed high or won. For example, the South Carolina Air Guard's 169th Tactical Fighter Group garnered top team honors in the Air Force's worldwide gunnery contest, Gunsmoke '89. The Air Guard and the total force concept would be tested again in the major operations of the 1990s: Desert Shield and the first Gulf War, Desert Storm.

Desert Shield and Desert Storm

Following the seizure of Kuwait by Iraqi forces in August 1990, the Air Force turned to its reserve components for help and was swamped with volunteers. Before President Bush mobilized Reservists and Guardsmen on August 22, 1990, nearly 1,300 Air Guardsmen actually entered active duty as volunteers. Initially, most of them concentrated on aerial refueling and airlifting American forces to the Persian Gulf region. The first two ANG units to volunteer before the president's mobilization order were the 105th Military Airlift Group, New York ANG, and the 172nd Military Airlift Group, Mississippi ANG. Respectively, they flew the C-5A and the C-141. KC-135 Tankers also participated in those early deployments. Those early volunteers helped the Air Force meet its operational commitments without forcing President Bush to announce a premature reserve mobilization.

Altogether, 12,456 Air Guardsmen participated in Air Force operations during the Persian Gulf crisis. When called upon, Air Guardsmen were immediately prepared to perform their missions alongside their active force counterparts. They did not need additional training or new equipment to do their jobs. They were integrated into most of the Air Force's operational missions, flying airlift

and aerial refueling sorties, and manning aerial ports. Guardsmen also flew attack, aerial reconnaissance, special operations, and tactical airlift missions.

Relatively few ANG outfits were mobilized as units. Instead, the Air Force called up packages of equipment and personnel that were developed after the crisis began. While that created some problems when units found they needed the reassigned individuals, the Air Guard validated its approach to the total force policy during the Persian Gulf crisis. The resources and hard work of the 1980s paid off. Compared to previous mobilizations, ANG units and individuals were much better prepared to perform their missions upon entry into federal service. Units were well equipped and well trained. As planned, they were able to respond much more rapidly and effectively than in previous call-ups. They were integrated into operations with their active duty and Air Force Reserve counterparts with a minimum of disruption and delay. Once in federal service, they performed ably by any standard across a broad spectrum of missions. In contrast to early mobilizations, in most areas, Air Force leaders showed no reluctance to call on the Air Guard. While the availability of adequate active duty fighter resources limited the ANG's participation in the first Gulf War, in at least two areas, airlift and aerial refueling, the contributions of the Air Guard and the Air Force Reserve were essential to the speed and the scope of the American military intervention in the Persian Gulf.

The roles played by the Air Guard in the Persian Gulf crisis defined it for a new era. Despite some misgivings because of the potential impact on unit morale and cohesion, the ANG had to be capable of responding to a broad spectrum of missions ranging from counterterrorism to regional conflicts and even a major

war with the remnants of the Soviet Union. To do that it was prepared to tailor its responses to fit the situation and serve the needs of the active duty Air Force. Mobilizing entire flying units and maintaining their integrity while in federal service, although desirable, would no longer be the only acceptable approach to supporting the Air Force in a crisis. Instead the Air Guard would be flexible in its response in order to fit the situation. That could involve individual volunteers, tailored packages of volunteers, or mobilized Guardsmen developed in response to specific contingencies ("situations requiring military operations ... to protect US interests"). On the other hand entire units up to wing level could mobilize and operate as stand-alone units on austere bases.

By validating the total force policy, the Air Guard strengthened its ability to play a major role in the post-Cold War U.S. military establishment. In the eyes of its senior leadership, the Air Guard's military capability was no longer a significant question. The real concern, however, was the accessibility of Air Guard assets for repeated and extended federal callups in the new world order. Senior Air Force officials were concerned that volunteers would not always be available from the Guard when needed. As a result, the officials were often more comfortable with the idea of mobilization. Air National Guard leaders, on the other hand, feared that repeated callups, voluntary or mobilization, and long tours of active duty would drive airmen out of their units. Nevertheless by reinventing itself during the Persian Gulf conflict, the Air National Guard and its leadership sought to demonstrate to the Air Force that ANG assets would be available to augment the active duty force as a valued partner whenever needed. ❧

Volunteers

Senior Master Sergeant Bob Myco crawled under the A-10 Thunderbolt at the end of the foreign runway, carefully performing a last-minute inspection. Also known as the Warthog, the Flying Gun, and the Tankbuster, the A-10 had as its mission ground attacks against tanks, armored vehicles and installations, and close air support of ground forces. Sergeant Myco looked for cuts in the tires, gas or oil leaks, and exterior panels that had not been properly secured. Weapons personnel removed safety devices from the aircraft's missiles and the pilot was ready to launch. As the A-10 taxied to the runway,



An Air Force A-10A Thunderbolt II aircraft from the 104th Fighter Group, Massachusetts Air National Guard, taxis on the runway at Aviano Air Base, Pordenone, Italy, to take off for NATO airstrikes against the Bosnian Serbs, September 6, 1995. (Photographer: TSgt Bruce Sherwood. Air Force Photo.)

Myco signaled thumbs up and saluted. A very long day later and 6,000 miles to the west, he wandered through the familiar base hangar where he had worked for 40 years. Glancing at his watch—it was 3:30 a.m. local time—Myco realized that he only had a few hours before he had to be ready for work. The Westfield, Massachusetts, school system was introducing its new superintendent. As a high school guidance counselor, Myco could not afford to be late. Like other members of the 104th Fighter Wing of the Massachusetts Air National Guard (ANG), Sergeant Myco had just spent part of his summer vacation launching aircraft from Aviano Air Base, Italy, on

other contingency operations during the 1990s also marked another major stage in the gradual transformation of the ANG to an organization capable of both short notice mobilizations and long term voluntary augmentations of global Air Force operations while operating a broad range of modern weapons systems. Through 1999, despite some significant exceptions to the general pattern, most of that augmentation capability came from aviation packages of individuals from several Air Guard flying units. For Air Guardsmen, the growing pace of overseas operations intensified the competing demands of their families, civilian jobs, and military

of a new era. Instead of preparing only for conventional warfare—a World War III or a major regional conflict—the ANG recast itself as a major partner in the daily global operations of the Air Force. It modernized its weapons systems and added new missions to its portfolio. Relying primarily on volunteers, Air Guardsmen participated in actual, “real world” military operations on a daily basis to relieve the growing deployment burdens carried by active force personnel.

Following the first Gulf War, the Air Guard’s senior leadership in the National Guard Bureau began to adapt their organization for the post-Cold War era in a series of far-reaching discussions

For Air Guardsmen, the growing pace of overseas operations intensified the competing demands of their families, civilian jobs, and military duties.

peacekeeping and combat missions over Bosnia. His unit had deployed to Italy between August and October 1995.

Myco’s experience had become increasingly common for Air Guardsmen as the United States struggled to cope with growing instability in the Balkans, Middle East, and Africa. The availability of significant numbers of well-trained, combat-ready units and individuals in the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve enabled a shrinking active duty Air Force to expand reserve participation in contingencies during most of the 1990s without involuntary recalls to active duty. Because of repeated activations during that decade and the high level of personnel stability in ANG flying units, a majority of them contained large numbers of personnel familiar with the Balkans and the unique operational requirements in that volatile part of the world. The growing involvement of Air Guardsmen in the Balkans and

duties. Generally, those conflicting pressures were kept within acceptable bounds because the Guard stressed short—15 to 30 day—voluntary tours of active duty by traditional (i.e., part-time) Guard members and an increased reliance on the ANG’s growing complement of full-time support personnel.

Adapting the Force for the Post-Cold War Era

The breakup of the Soviet Union signaled the end of the Cold War. Looking toward a more peaceful future and eager to balance the budget, post-Gulf War U.S. defense policies produced major changes for the Air National Guard. Between the reduction of America’s active duty armed forces and the interventionist foreign policies of U.S. presidents, the ANG adapted its force structure, organization, equipment, and operating procedures to remain relevant to the military requirements

with top echelon Air Force personnel, state officials, unit leaders, and members of Congress. Essentially, the Air Force agreed it would attempt to retain all ANG and Air Force Reserve flying units while reducing its own as a cost-effective way to maintain a post-Cold War force structure. The Air Guard experienced a modest decline in assigned personnel from 117,786 in September 1991 to 108,487 by September 2001 while the number of uniformed active duty Air Force personnel shrank dramatically from 510,432 to 353,751 during that same period. Driven by its growing involvement in real world operations, the acquisition of more sophisticated weapons systems, and the acceptance of new missions, the proportion of full time Air Guard personnel grew from 28 percent in October 1991 to nearly 31 percent 10 years later.

To preserve its flying units in the face of increasingly tight budgets, the Air Guard’s senior leadership in the National

Guard Bureau decided that they would modernize their reserve component's aircraft inventory. It would achieve that in several ways. As limited amounts of newer equipment became available from a smaller Air Force, and budgets tightened, the ANG would reduce the numbers of aircraft assigned to each unit. If necessary, it would combine units at the same locations. Some organizations would close down, but only as a last resort. Furthermore, the Air Guard leaders vowed to seek new missions. They emphasized that their organization must accomplish needed changes in a cooperative manner with the Air Force. The Guard depended on a healthy, active Air Force and it could not afford a bitter fight with that service over increasingly tight resources.

Aided by the newer aircraft from the shrinking Air Force inventory, the Air Guard modernized and reshaped its fleet after the Cold War. The size and composition of the ANG's aircraft inventory changed significantly after 1991. In September of that year it possessed 1,551 mission and support aircraft. That figure diminished to 1,180 by December 2001. Accelerating a trend that had begun following the Korea War, the Air Guard continued to shift from a predominantly fighter force to one that incorporated units responsible for a broad spectrum of flying and combat support missions. Fewer and fewer combat aircraft were in that mix. From 1991 to 2001 the ANG experienced an enormous growth in large aircraft including C-130s, KC-135s and B-1s at the expense of smaller fighter planes.

One of the most critical modernization challenges facing the ANG involved its extensive fleet of older model F-16s, especially the requirement to conduct precision attacks of ground targets around-the-clock in poor weather conditions. Historically, the Air Force



Air National Guard personnel use forklifts to unload pallets of cargo from a C-130 Hercules aircraft in Split, Croatia, December 1, 1994. (Air Force Photo.)

had not adequately supported ANG's requirements for that critical equipment. The Air National Guard consequently initiated an acquisition program with the Air Force Reserve Command to develop a new precision ground attack capability. As its goal ANG sought to acquire for F-16 Block 25/30/32 aircraft, around-the-clock, all-weather, precision strike capabilities against surface targets. Northrop Grumman's advanced technology LITENING II targeting pod met the specifications. The Air Guard's participation in real world Air Force operations was a crucial factor in securing the support needed to obtain adequate numbers of targeting pods. In addition, ANG initiated programs to equip its fighters with computer data links, night vision goggles, and nighttime cockpit lighting.

The first Air Guard F-16s equipped with LITENING II pods and night vision goggles deployed to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, in September 2000 to participate in Operation Northern Watch, which enforced a no-fly zone over Iraq.

In addition, the Air Guard pursued relatively new or "sunrise" technologies and missions such as space operations. Air National Guard senior leaders and planners began evaluating ways to involve their organization in space missions as early as 1988. Because of hesitation by Air Force Space Command to accept such ANG initiatives, Air Guard leaders launched a "full court press" to educate Space Command leadership on the ANG's space potential. Success came when the 137th Space Warning Squadron of the Colorado Air National Guard was activated at Greeley on

January 21, 1996. By the end of 2000 the Air Guard boasted three more units with space-related missions.

Another major change involved organizational formats. The ANG had long held that it should consist of self-contained units that operated and maintained their own equipment. Historically, most of those units had been located at municipal airports, not Air Force bases. After General Lloyd Newton, commander of the Air Education and Training Command, requested assistance to help the Air Force train F-15 pilots, ANG established its first fighter training associate unit at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, on October 1, 1999.

Establishing diversity within the Air Guard continued as a goal throughout the 1990s. However, its definition and methods changed depending on the ANG director. Major General Paul

the Air National Guard by focusing on workforce diversity and assuring fair and equitable participation for all. The goal is to recruit, retain and promote men and women from every heritage, racial, and ethnic group.” By the end of 1999, the Air National Guard was 8.7 percent African-American, 3.3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 5.3 percent Hispanic, in every case representing tiny increases from the beginning of the decade. Women, however, increased from 13.1 to 16.4 percent of the force.

Real World Operations

Following Operation Desert Storm, Air Guard personnel became increasingly engaged in helping the active duty armed services conduct operations around the globe. The 15-day active duty tour to support real world operations was popular with traditional

yet still meet the civilian employment and family needs of its traditional members while avoiding the politically sensitive and bureaucratically complex mobilization process.

Together Reserve and Guard troops contributed some 13 million days of duty to real world operations each year from 1991 through 2000. Within the total Air Force, significant percentages of some of its most critical mission capabilities resided in its reserve components: e.g., 64 percent of its tactical airlift, 55 percent of its aerial refueling, 38 percent of tactical air support, and 27 percent of its strategic airlift in 2001. It seemed unlikely that the Air Force would ever take on even a small real world operation without calling upon the Air Guard and Air Force Reserve.

Air National Guard units had significant incentives to participate in real world operations. Especially for tankers and transports, such operations provided good training for Guardsmen. Their airlift and air refueling operations mirrored most of their war plan training requirements. Fighter units benefited from deploying and flying in hostile areas where they were occasionally threatened by ground fire from surface-to-air (SAM) missiles and antiaircraft artillery. However, like their active duty counterparts, Air Guard fighter pilots had to catch up on critical aspects of their combat training after they returned from overseas deployments. Such deployments also reminded senior American political and military officials of how important the Air Guard had become to the nation’s total military capacity in an era of diminished defense resources.

Although limited in scope, the practice of deploying Air Guard volunteers overseas on short active duty tours to support real world operations was already well established before the Cold War ended. For example, Air National Guard units equipped with KC-97L tankers

Air National Guard senior leaders and planners began evaluating ways to involve their organization in space missions as early as 1988.

Weaver Jr., a transport and fighter pilot who led the Air National Guard from January 1998 to February 2002, put a particularly strong emphasis on diversity. He strengthened the Human Resources Quality Board and the role of Human Resources Advisers in the field in an effort to promote a more diverse Air Guard culture. Under General Weaver, the Diversity Office in the Personnel Division proclaimed as its goal: “to increase mission readiness in

(i.e., part-time) Air Guardsmen because it coincided with their required period of annual active duty for training and could be substituted for the latter. To prevent the Air Guard from becoming merely a manpower pool of individual replacements for active duty Air Force members, most Guard volunteers served in tailored “packages” of manpower and equipment provided by their units. That practice enabled ANG units to augment the increasingly hard-pressed Air Force

had refueled Air Force fighters in Europe from 1967 to 1977 with volunteers on short tours of active duty in Germany. During the 1970s ANG and Air Force Reserve flying units began serving short tours in Latin America.

In August 1990 ANG F-15 and F-16 fighter units initiated similar rotational service for Operation Coronet Nighthawk, the successor to Volant Oak, out of Howard Air Force Base, Panama. Those units monitored suspected airborne drug traffickers transiting Central America as well as the adjacent oceans. The ANG continued to play a significant role in counterdrug operations as the active duty Air Force concentrated its resources elsewhere. Beginning in 1989 the Air Guard deployed mobile ground-based radar assets to the Caribbean to help strengthen existing U.S. and host nation capabilities in the region. Eventually, the Air Guardsmen operated two radar sites in Colombia as well as one each in Ecuador and Peru. Each site could operate around-the-clock throughout the year. Although active duty Air Force officers commanded, the rest of the personnel were Air Guard volunteers. The radar sites were part of an Andean air interception strategy for illegal drugs developed by Headquarters, U.S. Air

Force, in 1989. As the 1999 transfer of the Canal to Panama approached, the Air Guard began turning the operation over to contractors. The last Air Guardsmen completed their deployments to those South American sites in 1999.

The fighters assigned to South America were an exception. Although Air Guard airlift and tanker units were already routinely engaged in real world operations during the early 1990s, such was not the case with most of its large fighter force. Only 22 of 800 ANG fighter aircraft were deployed outside the western hemisphere in 1993 and 26 in 1994 to participate in real world operations. To lower potential barriers to greater ANG participation in such operations, especially by fighter units, the Air Guard worked around the existing Cold War era system of accessing its units. The ANG developed provisional or “rainbow” units of personnel and equipment from several organizations that came together for specific short-term deployments. In addition the Guard expanded the use of the mandatory 15-day annual training periods to involve Guardsmen in real world operations and promoted greater reliance on full-time ANG personnel in operational deployments. Most of the fighters overseas in the 1990s protected

the Iraqi no-fly zones and were active in the Balkans.

Other overseas operations during the 1990s took Air Guardsmen to Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, Haiti, and Rwanda to augment the Air Force in a series of contingencies and humanitarian relief operations. As in Latin America, units usually deployed volunteers overseas on short tours of active duty. Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units would generally assume responsibility for an operation for 30 to 90 days, and then rotate their personnel on 15 to 30 day tours to a given location until the commitment ended. Despite the high level of personnel turnover, the training and the relatively high experience levels of those volunteers enabled them to function effectively in a wide variety of missions.

Testifying before a congressional committee in March 1996, Air Guard Director Major General Donald W. Shepperd explained how the ANG’s growing involvement in global military operations had changed the lives of its members. He stressed, “We used to stay home and train. We still do but we have taken on new roles.... In the old days, five overseas training deployments was a heavy year. This year we did twenty.” Shepperd added, “In the old days, the



F-16ADFs from the 144th Fighter Wing, California Air National Guard, and the 119th Fighter Wing, North Dakota Air National Guard, at Howard Air Base, Panama, for Operation Nighthawk, June 1996. (Photo courtesy of Lt Col Steve Couchman, National Guard Bureau.)

Air Force was large enough to handle all but the largest contingencies. Now, we are called upon to supply major portions of our strategic transports and tankers immediately even for small contingencies. Our average aircrew participates 110-120 days per year with the Guard, our average support personnel 60-80.” Shepperd added that Guardsmen walked “a fine line of cooperation” between their families and their employers, on the one hand, and their willingness to participate in the ANG, on the other. He concluded, “Our job is to work carefully this balance.”

One important measure of the growing demands placed upon Air Guardsmen was the sharp increase in the average number of workdays they performed above their minimum 39-day annual military obligation (i.e., 15 days of annual training and 12 weekends). That average participation figure grew from five additional workdays per Air Guardsman during Fiscal Year 1990 to 27 in Fiscal Year 2001, a 540 percent increase. Moreover, the Air National Guard’s percentage of total Air Force aircraft deployments for real world operations increased from 10 to 50 percent. Despite its enormously increased level of activity, the Air Guard’s overall personnel retention rate remained steady at about 90 percent.

Somalia, in Africa, provided the first major post-Cold War test of Air Guard volunteerism for real world operations. In it, the United States led an international coalition, approved by the United Nations (UN) Security Council, which intervened militarily to protect humanitarian relief efforts. Operation Provide Relief began in the summer of 1992 as an effort to alleviate famine in that country ravaged by a war between Somali tribal factions. In December, a new effort, Operation Restore Hope supplemented it to bring

order and a secure environment that would lead to a political reconciliation. Those operations continued to run simultaneously and eventually came to be considered as one effort.

Air National Guard participation in Restore Hope began in August 1992. Originally an air refueling operation, Air Guard and Reserve tankers and crews based at Moron, Spain, helped maintain an air bridge that accelerated the movement of troops, supplies, and equipment from the United States to

as needed. Volunteers from four Air Guard hospital units also served at Cairo West. In addition, Air National Guard Security Police from three squadrons participated in the Somalia effort.

The American attempt to build an effective civilian government in Somalia fell apart after the famed “Black Hawk Down” incident that ended with 18 American soldiers killed and 84 wounded during a gun battle in Mogadishu in October 1993. As a result President Bill Clinton’s administration’s



Major General Donald W. Shepperd, Director, Air National Guard, visits with Air Guardsmen in the Balkans. (Air Force Photo.)

Somalia. Air Guard and Reserve C-141s and C-130s flying from a base at Mombassa, Kenya, also delivered food and medicine to Somalia. Because of the state of anarchy on the ground, aircraft flew in and out of the country as quickly as possible, unloading cargo with engines running, to avoid any threats to aircraft and crews. Altogether, the Air Guard contributed elements of eight airlift and 18 air refueling units to Somalia relief operations. Volunteer medical technicians from nine ANG aeromedical evacuation squadrons supported the operations from Cairo West, Egypt, and rotated into Mogadishu, Somalia,

support for that nation-building effort evaporated. In March 1994 the last American troops left Somalia and chaos returned to that nation. On the basis of the Somalia fiasco, many American military planners and senior officers concluded that force protection and few or no American casualties would be the principal criteria for gauging the success of future operations.

African relief efforts, however, continued. On July 22, 1994, President Clinton committed U.S. military forces to help provide relief to refugees from a civil war in Rwanda who had fled to neighboring countries. Between April



Technical Sergeant Bill Feenstra arms an AIM 9 Sidewinder missile on an A-10A Thunderbolt from the 172nd Fighter Group, Michigan Air National Guard, prior to take off from Aviano Air Base, Pordenone, Italy. He is one of many Guardsmen who volunteered for Operation Deny Flight to enforce the United Nations no-fly zone over war-torn Bosnia-Herzegovina, December 14, 1994. (Photographer: Sgt Mike Reinhardt. Air Force Photo.)

6, 1994, when the war began, and July 16, 1994, when it ended, Rwanda was engulfed in a genocidal killing spree that claimed up to 800,000 lives, forced two million people to flee the country, and displaced another million individuals within its own borders. The United States and other nations initially refused to intervene militarily to stop the killing. However, by the end of July, American military personnel deployed to Africa to set up the infrastructure needed to provide U.S. support that would complement international humanitarian relief efforts. That mission focused on providing food, water, shelter, and health care to the refugees. Air Guardsmen participated in the Rwanda relief operations in two rotations from July 30, 1994, to November 15, 1994. Their C-130s flew 915 sorties while logging 1,598.2 flying hours and delivering 4,515.8 tons of

cargo and carrying 4,021 passengers.

While U.S. military personnel were participating in humanitarian relief efforts in Rwanda and neighboring states, a long running political crisis in Haiti finally came to a head. That impoverished Caribbean island nation had its democratically elected president ousted by a military coup in September 1991. Three years later the military leaders were pressured to leave power. United States forces landed on the island to restore order and help reestablish civil institutions. The Air Guard responded within a few hours to Air Force requests for assistance to Haiti in Operation Uphold Democracy (later renamed Operation Maintain Democracy). The ANG provided volunteer aircrews and C-130 transports from 14 units to support the U.S. military intervention. Those Air Guardsmen completed 149 sorties, carrying 324.3 tons of cargo

and 824 passengers, while accumulating 464.3 flight hours.

Balkan Blowback

In the early to mid 1990s most of the former communist nations in Eastern Europe pursued peaceful means to establish democratic forms of government, develop capitalist economic systems, and cultivate closer ties with NATO member states. But in a bloody blow back from the Cold War, Yugoslavia followed a radically different path. Marshall Josip Broz Tito had maintained Yugoslavia as a multiethnic communist state independent of the Kremlin's control following World War II. After Tito's death in 1980 that Balkan nation unraveled with the major conflict between the ethnic Serbian Christians and the Muslims of Bosnia. Following U.S. military intervention in the early 1990s to deal with the growing crisis, increasing

numbers of Air Guardsmen became involved in Operation Provide Promise in that turbulent corner of Europe.

In July 1992 crews and C-130s from West Virginia's 167th Airlift Group inaugurated ANG involvement in Operation Provide Promise by flying food and relief supplies from Rhein-Main Air Base in Germany to Sarajevo, Bosnia's capital, which had a population of 380,000. That operation expanded significantly the following February to include airdrops of food and medicine to Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia blockaded by Bosnian Serbs. Altogether, personnel and C-130s from 12 ANG units participated in Provide Promise. During the operation, Air Force, ANG, and Reserve transports flew 4,533 sorties and delivered 62,802 metric tons of cargo. They performed airlift, airdrop, and medical evacuation missions. The Americans made a major contribution to the overall allied effort, which involved airmen from 21 nations. The humanitarian airlift operation accounted for about 95 percent of the aid delivered during the three-and one-half-year siege of Sarajevo.

On April 2, 1993, NATO troops from Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, Germany, and Italy as well as the United States launched Operation Deny Flight, a no-fly zone for Serbian aircraft over Bosnia-Herzegovina. It enforced a March 1993 UN Security Council Resolution passed to help prevent the war from spreading. The operation also provided close air support to UN ground forces serving as peacekeepers, and air strikes against Serb weapons threatening UN-designated safe areas in Bosnia. The first ANG fighter unit involved was Connecticut's A-10-equipped 103rd Fighter Group. Aircraft and personnel from Maryland's 175th Fighter Group and Michigan's 110th Fighter Group



Former Yugoslavia, 1996. (Central Intelligence Agency.)

joined the contingent from Connecticut. Along with unit personnel the six Air National Guard and six Air Force Reserve A-10s returned to their home stations in mid-January 1994 after flying 520 sorties and accumulating over 1,400 hours of Deny Flight flying time. Air National Guard tanker support of Deny Flight began in June 1994 with the dispatch of 10 KC-135s and 18 aircrews from six units to Istres, France, and Pisa, Italy. By the time Deny Flight ended on December 20, 1995, elements of seven Air Guard fighter and 11 air refueling units had participated in it.

Ground fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina escalated in the fall of 1994. Fearing the situation was spiraling completely out of control, the UN asked for NATO air strikes on Serbian forces. Those attacks began on November 21, 1994, but were hobbled by UN targeting

restrictions. Although the next month former U.S. President Jimmy Carter negotiated an uneasy cease-fire for the troubled region, it was broken in May 1995 when other former Yugoslavians, the Croats, recaptured western Slovenia from the Serbs. After that offensive chaos returned to the region. NATO initiated a bombing campaign, Operation Deliberate Force, in August 1995 after the Serbs shelled a Sarajevo marketplace killing 38 civilians and wounding 85 more. A contingent from the 104th Fighter Wing participated in Operation Deliberate Force. The intensity of the bombing stunned the Serbs. Coupled with victories of an American-trained Croatian-Muslim army in western Bosnia, that operation forced the Serbs to sue for peace. NATO halted the bombing on September 14, 1995, and ended Deliberate Force six days later. Air

power helped bring all sides to the peace table, but establishing a formal cessation of hostilities proved very difficult. An effective cease fire was finally instituted in October. The following month the presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, and Serbia negotiated a peace agreement at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio (the Dayton Accord). On December 14, 1995, the formal signing ceremony took place in Paris.

The Air Guard returned to the Balkans in the mid-1990s as part of the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia, Operation Joint Guard, and its successor, Operation Joint Forge. Volunteers from 13 Air Guard airlift units provided 71 C-130s to Joint Forge. On average, ANG airlift deployment packages consisted of approximately 75 personnel and two C-130 aircraft. They were based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, to provide the necessary airlift support for U.S. military forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and other locations across Europe. Rather than lock in commitments, tour lengths varied from several weeks to several months depending primarily upon the availability of volunteer Air Guardsmen. Air National Guard aircraft and personnel continued to serve in an operational pool of total force airlift assets assigned to the 38th Airlift Squadron (Provisional) at Ramstein Air Base. Although more expensive than longer deployments, the shorter tours held several advantages for the Air Guard C-130 units. They spread the burden giving a larger number of these units the operational expertise gained by European deployments while enabling them to maintain vigorous training programs in the United States that were critical to sustaining operational readiness.

Volunteers and EC-130E Commando Solo aircraft from the Pennsylvania Air Guard's 193rd Special Operations Group also supported Operation Joint

Guard during 1997. The unit's one-of-a-kind Commando Solo aircraft could conduct various kinds of information warfare including electronic attack and intelligence collection missions. For Bosnia-Herzegovina, however, it beamed in radio and television broadcasts. Air Guard combat communications and air traffic control organizations also contributed to NATO peacekeeping operations in the Balkans during the mid-1990s. Ultimately, not enough reserve air traffic controllers filled the void left by Air Force reductions for operations around the

The situation in Kosovo, Serbia, home to ethnic Albanians, in the late 1990s was perhaps the worst of the Balkan conflicts. Operation Allied Force, as NATO's response was called, began that year following the failure of diplomatic negotiations with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic. During the 1980s he had stripped Kosovo of its autonomy and instituted repressive policies. A Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) developed, which fought for independence. In March 1998 Serbian discrimination against Albanians turned into systematic



Staff Sergeants Steven Schreiner (left) and Shari Marsh, Refueling Squadron, 155th Air Refueling Wing, Nebraska Air National Guard, ensure a KC-135R Stratotanker is ready to relieve heavily tasked active duty units during Bosnia peacekeeping efforts, December 1, 1997. (Photographer: MSgt Rose S. Reynolds, USAF Air Force Photo.)

globe. The Air Force then used a form of limited mobilization called a Presidential Reserve Call-Up (PRC) for ANG units serving at Tazsar, Hungary. The PRCs enabled the president, without obtaining congressional authority, to recall as many as 200,000 Guardsmen and Reservists to active duty for as long as 270 days to conduct operational military missions in a specific geographic area. Eventually, 264 Air Guardsmen were called to active duty under PRC to support U.S. military operations in the Balkans.

government-sponsored violence against the insurgent KLA. Milosevic coined the term "ethnic cleansing" for his efforts to rid his country of all Albanians by promoting massacres of civilians and other acts of terrorism.

Once President Clinton decided upon military action, the Air Guard responded quickly. With only seven days elapsing between their call-up and deployment, Air Guard A-10 pilots began flying combat missions in Kosovo May 21, 1999. A senior Pentagon military

official told media representatives that Air Guardsmen made an impressive combat debut. “The first night into the fight the Guard A-10s destroyed almost a dozen [Serbian] tanks and the same number of artillery pieces. It was a great show right off the bat.” Those 18 A-10s deployed to Europe as the 104th Expeditionary Operations Group, a “rainbow” unit of personnel and equipment from the 104th Fighter Wing, Massachusetts, 110th Fighter Wing, Michigan, and the 124th Wing, Idaho. The “rainbow” configuration was employed because no single ANG A-10 unit possessed enough fighter aircraft to meet the United States European Command’s wartime requirements for Operation Allied Force.

Allied Force was a relatively one-sided military contest. The Serbs were isolated diplomatically and militarily and the tiny Serb air force could not challenge NATO. Moreover, allied airmen quickly destroyed or disabled the Serbian’s small inventory of MiG-29 fighters. From the outset of hostilities the alliance rejected using ground forces and went to great lengths to avoid casualties among its



An A-10A from the Air National Guard’s 104th Expeditionary Operations Group is armed for a combat mission at Trapani Air Base, Sicily, Italy, during Operation Allied Force, 1999. (Air National Guard Collection.)

President Clinton authorized an involuntary call-up on April 27, 1999, that included 25,000 Air Guard and Reserve personnel. In addition to the A-10 fighters, Air Guardsmen helped maintain the tanker air bridge over the Atlantic Ocean using KC-135 aircraft and volunteer personnel to refuel U.S. military aircraft deploying

power system, and bridges across major rivers as well as military installations and the economic resources of Belgrade’s ruling elite.

As in Bosnia the 193rd Operations Squadron from Pennsylvania provided two EC-130 Commando Solo aircraft to send broadcasts to the population below. Those Air Guardsmen participated

“The first night into the fight the Guard A-10s destroyed almost a dozen [Serbian] tanks and the same number of artillery pieces. It was a great show right off the bat.”

own aircrews and minimize enemy civilian deaths. American military leaders throughout the chain of command expected that two or three days of bombing would destroy Milosevic’s determination to resist NATO and the international community. Instead, the war lasted 78 days before ending on June 20, 1999.

to Europe. Air Guardsmen and Air Force Reservists also provided essential logistics, communications, and other ground-based support services and flew airlift aircraft during Operation Allied Force. While Serbian forces continued rampaging through Kosovo, NATO focused its escalating air attacks on Serbian industries, oil refineries, electrical

in missions lasting about seven or eight hours and their ground support personnel worked 12 to 14 hours every day with no time off. By the time they redeployed to their home station on July 2, 1999, they compiled 735.7 mission flight hours while logging 1,338.7 broadcast hours. Altogether 4,064 Air Guard personnel, including

volunteers, and 83 fighter, tanker, airlift, and special operations aircraft were called into federal service for Allied Force serving both in Europe and in the United States.

Meanwhile in 1999 five ANG units deployed eight C-130s, crews, and support personnel to Bosnia-Herzegovina for Operation Joint Forge, a peacekeeping mission. Known as Delta Squadron, and operating out of Ramstein Air Base, Germany, 1,084 Air Guardsmen rotated through short active duty tours. Personnel from a large number of units in the ANG battle management community also participated either in Europe or remained at their home stations and trained personnel who did deploy. Air National Guard combat

communications personnel and air traffic controllers also deployed to various locations.

The establishment of a fragile peace in Kosovo did not end the political instability in the Balkans. American forces, including elements of the Air National Guard, continued to engage in peacekeeping operations along with their NATO allies and the Russians. The Air National Guard, bolstered by upgraded equipment, continued to serve in the Balkans into the 21st century. When the 167th Airlift Wing, West Virginia ANG, deployed for their three-week rotation to Ramstein Air Base in November 2001, aircrews successfully demonstrated their ability to conduct airdrops under adverse

weather conditions using the Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System and night vision goggles. The 167th Airlift Squadron crews successfully delivered troops via parachute and airdropped cargo over obscured targets at night.

Operation Southern Watch

After the first Gulf War ended in 1991, air power played a significant role in containing Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq, as did a naval blockade and United Nations economic sanctions. Together those forces also crippled the economic and military foundations of Hussein's power. The Air National Guard participated widely in that long campaign, which featured U.S. and

Four F-16C Block 40 Fighting Falcon aircraft assigned to the 188th Fighter Squadron, 150th Fighter Wing, New Mexico Air National Guard, carrying LANTIRN targeting pods, start engines prior to missions, at Ahmed Al Jaber Airbase, Kuwait, during Operation Southern Watch, April 21, 1998. (Photographer: A1C Greg L. Davis, USAF Air Force Photo.)



coalition aircraft maintaining two no-fly zones over portions of Iraq: Operation Southern Watch and Operation Northern Watch. In addition, ANG provided humanitarian aid to the Kurdish population in northern Iraq.

Encouraged by American calls for regime change in Baghdad after Iraq's crushing military defeat during Operation Desert Storm, Muslims in the southern part of Iraq rebelled against Saddam Hussein. The Iraqi military and police forces savagely repressed the uprising, killing tens of thousands of Shiites. When those armed assaults continued despite diplomatic protests, President George H. W. Bush announced on August 26, 1992, that a coalition of UN forces would launch air surveillance operations below Iraq's 32nd parallel south to ensure that no Iraqi fixed wing aircraft or helicopters flew over that area. Air Guardsmen, serving as volunteers, played significant roles in enforcing the southern no-fly zone. From January 1993 through September 1999, the ANG provided five percent of the average monthly total Air Force aircraft deployed to the Persian Gulf for Operation Southern Watch.

The corresponding Air Guard data from October

1999 through September 11, 2001, was 16 percent.

As Operation Southern Watch continued, U.S. Central Command requested assistance from the Air Guard and Air Force Reserve for areas in which the Air Force lacked the manpower to meet the growing demands placed upon them. The first Air Guard Southern Watch contingent included volunteers and C-130s from North Carolina's 145th Airlift Group, and Georgia's 165th Airlift Group. Most of those deployed Air Guardsmen were volunteers on short tours (15 to 30 days) of active duty. In addition, personnel and HH-60 Pave Hawk combat search and rescue helicopters from Alaska's 210th Rescue Squadron, California's 129th Rescue Squadron, and New York's 106th Rescue Squadron joined them, usually on 100 day tours.

Air National Guard fighters also began to deploy to southern Iraq in 1993. The Idaho ANG's 124th Fighter Group deployed six F-4G Phantom II Wild Weasel aircraft to the Persian Gulf. One of only two such units remaining in the total Air Force, it deployed for six months to perform against enemy air defense missions. To

minimize the impact on the 124th traditional

Air National Guard members while meeting a critical Air Force tasking, almost three quarters of the personnel who participated in that deployment, including almost half of the pilots, were full-time Air Guardsmen. Members of the 124th Fighter Group, at the request of the Air Force, volunteered for additional tours in Southwest Asia that lasted until July 1994.

After two years of relative quiet due at least in part to the presence of American fighter aircraft, in October 1994, Baghdad began moving ground troops toward its border with Kuwait. Additional coalition forces moved into the area and stepped up their surveillance operations. The total number of U.S. military personnel in theater rose to over 25,000 and the Air Force increased its aircraft in the area to more than 270 to deal with the growing threat. Some 265 ANG and Air Reserve volunteers, including 22 aircrews and 15 KC-135E Stratotankers quickly provided an air bridge to the Azores, in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Europe, to speed the movement of U.S. military aircraft to the Persian Gulf region. Giant C-5A Galaxies from the 105th Airlift Group, New York ANG, flew sorties in support of those operations. The United States declared the area a no-fly, no-drive zone

after Iraq assembled troops on its border with Kuwait. To implement that policy, a Joint Task





A U.S. Air Force F-16C Block 42 Fighting Falcon aircraft assigned to the 138th Fighter Wing, Oklahoma Air National Guard, takes off for a mission at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, during Combined Task Force/Operation Northern Watch, November 17, 2002. (Photographer: SSgt Jason W. Gamble, USAF Air Force Photo.)

Force Southwest Asia was established by the United States Central Command. Units from the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Army as well as Britain, France, Saudi Arabia, and later Kuwait enforced the southern no-fly zone. Coalition members contributed fighter patrols against potential targets, reconnaissance, suppression of enemy air defenses, air refueling, and special operations missions.

Portions of Air National Guard A-10 units from Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut deployed to Kuwait to form a "rainbow" unit primarily to conduct combat search and rescue support for any downed airmen and to attack Iraqi tanks if needed. Most ended up participating in what were essentially training missions outside of Iraq. However, Maryland's 104th Fighter Squadron flew 283 sorties over enemy territory and employed air-to-surface Maverick missiles successfully to destroy an Iraqi surface-to-air missile and a radio station during the operation.

After qualifying to employ AGM-65 Maverick missiles, elements of Pennsylvania's 111th Fighter Wing

deployed during 1994 to Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait, for three months with 12 of their OA-10 aircraft, the first ANG Warthogs to be based in that part of the world. The unit's pilots pioneered two key innovations on their aircraft to deal with challenges of navigating southern Iraq's vast barren landscape and rules of engagement that required high altitude flying. First, they used portable Global Positioning System (GPS) satellite navigation units mounted in their cockpits. Second, they employed powerful video-stabilized binoculars that they had tested on their own initiative to identify targets. With such a strong display of force by U.S. combat aircraft and the dispatch of an additional 12,000 ground troops to the area, Hussein withdrew his forces from Iraq's southern border.

Reacting to growing operational demands placed on Air Force F-16 units, the Air Combat Command approved a plan in October 1995 to dispatch ANG Fighting Falcon units to Operation Southern Watch on 30-day rotations. The following March the District

of Columbia ANG's 121st Fighter Squadron, 113th Wing became the first ANG F-16 unit to deploy to the Persian Gulf region for that operation. About 90 volunteers, including 10 pilots, went to the Middle East with six F-16C Block 30 aircraft. Before returning to their home station in April, pilots from the 121st accumulated 400 flight hours and over 100 combat sorties.

Air Force and Navy aircraft attacked targets in southern Iraq on September 3, 1996, in response to Iraqi military moves against the nation's Kurdish population in the north. In retaliation for attacks on the Kurds, President Clinton also expanded the southern no-fly zone placing it just south of Baghdad. Combined with the northern no-fly zone enforced to protect the Kurds, the expanded Operation Southern Watch ensured that little airspace remained for the Iraqis to use without confronting U.S. and coalition aircraft.

During 1996 and 1997, volunteers from Guard airlift and fighter units continued to deploy to Iraq for short tours of duty. Saddam Hussein in

late 1997 refused to allow UN arms inspectors to have unrestricted access to sites in Iraq suspected to be involved with the production of weapons of mass destruction. As a result, the United States increased its air and naval forces in the region to deal with that crisis, code named Desert Thunder. Air National Guard tanker task forces operated in Alaska, Washington State, New Hampshire, and Maine as well as in Southwest Asia to support it. That operation was terminated in early 1998 when diplomacy temporarily resolved the crisis. During that year, five tanker, four airlift, and five fighter units from the Air Guard furnished personnel and aircraft to the Joint Task Force Southwest Asia. Operation Desert Fox took place in mid-December 1998 when Saddam Hussein declared the no-fly zones as violations of Iraq's sovereignty, expelled the UN weapons inspectors, and instructed his air defense batteries to more aggressively attack coalition aircraft. The Air National Guard helped maintain an air bridge to the Persian Gulf region as they had throughout the mid-1990s.

Operation Northern Watch

Similar to the situation faced by Iraq's Shiites in the south, that nation's repressed Kurdish population in the north was encouraged to rise up against the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein by American radio broadcasts after Operation Desert Storm. When the Kurds rebelled in March 1991 the United States refused to provide direct military assistance and their uprising was crushed by Iraqi forces. Over one million Kurds fled Iraq, but thousands more were trapped in the cold, barren mountains of the northern region of that nation when neighboring countries closed their borders. Deprived of adequate food, water, and shelter, untold numbers of them

died. The UN Security Council authorized a relief effort to save the Iraqi Kurds, and the U.S. Air Force played a significant role. A coalition led by the United States then deployed military forces on the ground in northern Iraq, built resettlement areas for the Kurds, and established a security zone that excluded Saddam Hussein's forces. Coalition fighter aircraft and supporting planes enforced that no-fly zone for the Iraqis above the 36th parallel and covered friendly ground forces.

On November 12, 1993, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John M. Shalikashvili, U.S. Army, requested that the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve participate in

was adopted because Guardsmen were convinced that none of their individual general purpose F-16 units had enough aircraft and personnel available at that time to sustain the deployment on a volunteer basis without undermining their operational training and retention programs in the United States.

Once in theater, the Air Guardsmen flew daylight defensive counter air, escort, and reconnaissance missions enforcing the no-fly zone over northern Iraq during daylight hours. Usually, the aircraft were configured with electronic counter measure pods, external fuel tanks, cluster bombs, and antiaircraft missiles. Missions typically lasted about three hours and

Their senior leadership saw the success of those “rainbow” deployments as a further validation of the ANG fighter force's accessibility, readiness, willingness, and capability to accomplish real-world taskings.

Operation Provide Comfort II, the predecessor of Operation Northern Watch, to help alleviate the growing operational burden placed on active duty Air Force personnel. The resulting “rainbow” unit of four ANG fighter squadrons trained together and in December 1993, equipped with F-16C Block 30 aircraft, arrived at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. The “rainbow” concept

included a minimum of one in-flight refueling per sortie. The volunteer rate in the deploying fighter units was extremely high. The 184 Guard volunteers and their 11 warplanes started returning to their stateside bases on January 15, 1994. Their senior leadership saw the success of those “rainbow” deployments as a further validation of the ANG fighter force's accessibility, readiness, willingness,

and capability to accomplish real-world taskings.

On January 1, 1997, Operation Northern Watch replaced Provide Comfort II. Aircraft from the United States, Britain, and Turkey participated in the new operation that was focused strictly on enforcing the no-fly zone above the 36th parallel in Iraq as mandated by the UN and did not include humanitarian relief for the Kurds. The Turkish government continued to approve six-month extensions for coalition operations from its territory, but insisted that it would not allow Northern Watch to become a permanent mission.

During the late 1990s, the dangers associated with air operations over northern Iraq increased because Hussein's forces adopted a more aggressive strategy against coalition aircraft. Exploding surface-to-air missiles and antiaircraft artillery fire had become a commonplace challenge for coalition pilots. Despite the increased aggression and potential threats pilots faced, U.S. policy makers

discouraged Iraq from mounting another invasion of Kuwait, saved thousands of Kurdish lives, reduced hostile ethnic pressure on Turkey, and reminded Saddam Hussein how vulnerable his regime was to air attacks.

The Expeditionary Force Concept

In August 1998 the Air Force inaugurated a new concept. It organized more than 2,000 aircraft including those of reserve units into 10 Air Expeditionary Forces (AEFs), also known as the Aerospace Expeditionary Forces and in 2007, the Air and Space Expeditionary Forces. They would rotate in order to ease the strain of increased post-Cold War operations overseas. Volunteer members of Ohio's 179th Airlift Wing and Kentucky's 123rd Airlift Wing deployed in 1999 to Oman as the first members of the Air Guard C-130 community to deploy for Operation Southern Watch under AEF auspices.

Coalition forces returned fire more than 200 times between early 1999 and May 2001.

did not alter the level of air activity over the two no-fly zones. Coalition forces returned fire more than 200 times between early 1999 and May 2001. By the summer of 2001, Saddam Hussein had instituted a standing bounty on American and British pilots whose planes were destroyed.

The northern and southern no-fly zones over Iraq were generally considered effective in advancing U.S. foreign policy interests in that part of the world. They

The Air Directorate in the National Guard Bureau (NGB), convinced that their reserve component's continued viability depended upon its active participation in the AEF, played a significant role in developing the ground rules for the use of air reserve components. For the Air Guard's senior leadership, adequate funding, modern weapons, training slots in Air Force schools, and all the other resources needed to sustain a modern expeditionary air combat organization

at high levels of operational readiness would require heavy involvement in those forces. The well established practice of relying on short, voluntary tours of traditional Guardsmen and Reservists overseas inspired the key ideas under the leadership of the Director of the Air National Guard, Major General Paul A. Weaver, Jr. From experience the Air Directorate of the National Guard Bureau preferred to allow the reserve components to develop their own force packages, including "rainbow" deployments, to meet operational requirements. Those practices were also consistent with the established two-week annual training requirements of the air reserve components. Mobilizations and long overseas tours were generally ruled out at that point, except for major theater conflicts.

For the Air Guard, the AEF promised to spread the burden of deployments more widely among flying units. Moreover, the timing of rotations became more predictable. Greater predictability would enable their members to better manage the competing demands of families, civilian careers, and military service. The biggest change came regarding support units, which would be included in volunteer overseas rotations on a regular basis. Air Guard aviation units would be expected to deploy overseas once every 15 months while support units would do so at 30 month intervals. Driven by those requirements, Air Guard planners in the National Guard Bureau began to "reengineer" ANG units to better participate in their expeditionary roles. Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen bolstered the initiative in September 1997 by requiring the armed forces to remove barriers to fully integrating their reserve components in the full range of military operations.

Exemplifying the new policy, in 2000, three F-15, six F-16, and three A-10 units participated in four different multiunit



169th Fighter Wing Aircraft Generations Squadron, McEntire Air National Guard Station, South Carolina, personnel loading an AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile and other equipment onto an F-16CJ aircraft deployed at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. The 169th Fighter Wing was deployed in Aerospace Expeditionary Force #4 during Operation Northern Watch. It was the first ANG F-16 unit equipped with Suppression of Enemy Air and Defenses (SEAD) technology, January 19, 2000. (Photographer: SSgt Richard Hodges. Air Force Photo.)


ANG “rainbow” deployments to the Persian Gulf region that lasted about three months each. The experience of the Texas 147th Fighter Wing illustrated those rotations. It split a 90-day Air Guard commitment with two other ANG F-16 units, New Jersey’s 177th Fighter Wing and Vermont’s 158th Fighter Wing. The Texas unit sent about 150 personnel and two F-16Cs to Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia. Most American troops in Saudi Arabia’s capital, Riyadh, relocated to that isolated base following a terrorist bombing of U.S. Air Force barracks at a more urban Saudi Arabian base on June 15, 1996, that killed 19 airmen and wounded 547 others. Responsible for the middle portion of that deployment, those units relied primarily on F-16s provided by the New Jersey and Vermont

ANGs. The Texas Air Guard unit sent 10 new pilots every two weeks to expose as many of their aircrews as possible to the challenges of combat flying.

Despite some administrative glitches and lingering pockets of skepticism in the active force and some state National Guard organizations, the consensus of the Air Guard’s senior leadership was that the ANG’s participation in the AEF was very successful. In particular, the Air Guard considered routine participation in AEF deployments critical to the survival and flourishing of its units as highly capable military organizations relevant to the evolving American national security requirements.

Therefore, by the eve of a new presidential administration in 2001, the Air National Guard proved itself as part

of an operational total force. Its airlift capabilities, tankers, and fighters not only filled in gaps in the active duty Air Force, but comprised an essential component of overseas operations in Africa, the Balkans, and Southwest Asia. Similarly, its combat search and rescue personnel and its psychological operations Commando Solo aircraft proved their worth. With the implementation of the AEF after 1998, growing numbers of support units joined operational organizations in regular, relatively short voluntary rotations. As a result, the Air National Guard integrated seamlessly with the active duty Air Force while preserving its militia culture, unit integrity, and high level of operational readiness. However, it was about to face new and unexpected set of challenges as the new century dawned. ❧



The Pentagon in flames after terrorists flew a hijacked jet liner into the building at approximately 9:30 am on September 11, 2001. (Photographer: CPL Jason Ingersoll, USMC.)

AMERICA ATTACKED **SEPTEMBER 11, 2001**

The defining events for the Air National Guard (ANG) as well as for the United States occurred with the al Qaeda attacks of September 11, 2001. When President George W. Bush took office in January, 2001, however, the nation seemed quite secure. The Bush administration's Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, also held that position under President Gerald Ford. A former Navy pilot and four-term congressman, Secretary Rumsfeld returned

to the U.S. government after 23 years as the successful head of several major corporations. His corporate career convinced the new secretary that he knew how to make a large organization like the Department of Defense move and adapt to changing circumstances including dramatic developments in science and high technology.

Secondly, the new secretary was put off by what he perceived as the cautious, risk adverse approach of military leaders who had cut their professional teeth during the Vietnam War. He believed their mindset focused on winning large, conventional armed conflicts against other nations. With the disappearance of the Soviet military machine and the emergence of the United States as the world's only superpower, Secretary Rumsfeld doubted that any such convenient enemies would ever present themselves as sacrificial lambs to be easily destroyed by the awesome conventional and nuclear firepower of the U.S. armed forces. Assuming the nation had entered an era of deep peace with no peer competitors likely to challenge its military power for decades, Secretary Rumsfeld proclaimed his department would undergo a military transformation. The nation's armed forces would reshape into smaller but more lethal and flexible formations that could deal with a broad spectrum of threats through increased mobility and greater reliance on stealthy, high technology, long-range stand-off weapons. Furthermore, fewer ground



An F-15 Eagle, from the 125th Fighter Wing, Florida Air National Guard, sits on alert armed with AIM-120 Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles, and AIM-9 Sidewinders after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. (Photographer: TSgt Shaun Withers, USAF Air Force Photo.)

the homeland was not a major explicit priority of the administration.

The notion that the United States did not require a strong homeland defense capability actually began in the late 1960s with the growing realization that Soviet missiles, not bombers, posed the greatest

In 1991 the Air Force inactivated its last active duty fighter interceptor squadron, leaving that entire mission for fewer and fewer Air Guard fighter units to perform.

With no post-Cold War threat to the continental United States considered likely, the Department of Defense

After the demise of the Soviet Union, remnants of America's continental air defense system had been turned over to the Air National Guard.

troops would be needed and some Cold War weapons systems would become obsolete. Aside from developing an antiballistic missile system, defending

threat to America. After the demise of the Soviet Union, remnants of America's continental air defense system had been turned over to the Air National Guard.

focused on conducting contingency and peacekeeping operations overseas. Regional unified U.S. commands had been established to conduct military

operations in every other section of the world, but no counterpart American organization held responsibility for the coordinated land, sea, and air defense of the continental United States. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) provided an integrated system for defending Canada and the United States against attacks by aircraft and cruise missiles while maintaining the air sovereignty of those nations, but it had no responsibilities for land and naval operations. First Air Force, which had responsibility for ensuring the air sovereignty and air defense of the continental United States, supported NORAD.*

America Attacked

America's post-Cold War sense of invulnerability evaporated on September 11, 2001, when the al Qaeda terrorist network struck. The terrorists hijacked four cross-continental commercial airline flights laden with jet fuel and turned them into manned cruise missiles that killed over 3,000 people in New York City, Washington, DC, and a remote area of rural western Pennsylvania. It was the bloodiest single day in American history since the Civil War battle of Antietam that claimed over 24,000 casualties. In the celebrated traditions of America's colonial minutemen, the ANG played an immediate and critical role in the nation's military responses to al Qaeda's terrorism.

A terrorist act of that magnitude in the United States had not been totally unforeseen, but the military considered such an operation highly unlikely. After the coordinated bombing of two American embassies in Africa in 1998, the Federal Bureau of Investigation put al Qaeda head Osama bin Laden on its Ten Most Wanted

Fugitives list. Officials also testified that a major attack could occur. For example, the Defense Intelligence Agency predicted there would be "a major terrorist attack, either in the United States or abroad, over the next 12 to 24 months 'with a weapon designed to produce mass casualties.'"

The coordinated attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon occurred between 8:46 and 9:37 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time; United Airlines Flight 93 hit the ground in Pennsylvania at approximately 10:02 a.m. The only fighter units stationed within the entire northeastern United States belonged to the Air National Guard. At 8:38 a.m., the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in Boston, Massachusetts, reported a possible hijacking and called the Otis Air National Guard Base tower on Cape Cod, home to the Massachusetts

and as directed, headed for New York City, 153 miles away. Unknown to the pilots, American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City just as Colonel Marr was delivering his order. Meanwhile, at 8:43 a.m., the FAA reported another possible hijacking to the Northeast Air Defense Sector. That was Boston to Los Angeles United Airlines Flight 175. At 9:02 a.m., with the F-15s still 71 miles away, that plane crashed into the World Trade Center's South Tower.

Aircraft hijackings were rare events in the United States. As long as no lives were endangered, airline crews and FAA air traffic controllers had been trained to cooperate with the hijackers. Hijackings were treated as civilian law enforcement matters, although the FAA could request

A terrorist act of that magnitude in the United States had not been totally unforeseen, but the military considered such an operation highly unlikely.

ANG's 102nd Fighter Wing, to request military assistance. At that time, Major Dan Nash and Lieutenant Colonel Tim Duffy had air defense alert duty for the 102nd At 8:40 a.m. Colonel Bob Marr, a Massachusetts Air Guardsman serving as NORAD's Northeast Air Defense Sector commander, learned from the FAA that American Airlines Flight 11 might have been hijacked. The two pilots immediately suited up and headed for their F-15s. Marr ordered Nash and Duffy into the air; their F-15s were airborne within six minutes

that the military provide jet fighters and weapons controllers to monitor these situations. Normally, military assistance required a cumbersome process that involved the FAA forwarding the request through the national military command center and NORAD to the president or the secretary of defense. After approval a fighter would locate and follow a hijacked airliner from about five miles behind but not attempt to engage it.

Air National Guard weapons controllers at the Northeast Sector desperately searched for the first missing airliner but could only get momentary hits on a track that they thought might be it. Hampering

*First Air Force and its NORAD counterpart, the Continental NORAD Region [CONR], were headquartered at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. In 1997 the ANG assumed control of those two organizations from the Air Force. CONR was subdivided into three operational sectors at the time of the 9/11 attacks: the Southeast (Tyndall), the Northeast (Rome, NY), and the Western (McChord Air Force Base, Washington).



An F-15A Eagle from 102nd Fighter Wing, Massachusetts Air National Guard, flies a Combat Air Patrol over New York City as part of Operation Noble Eagle. F-15s from the 102nd were the first to arrive on scene over the World Trade Center following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. (Photo courtesy of 102nd Fighter Wing, Massachusetts Air National Guard.)

their search, air traffic in the skies over the United States was congested with over 4,000 airplanes at any given moment, most in the northeast. Moreover, the hijackers turned off the electronic transponders that helped FAA controllers identify commercial airliners. Weapons controllers throughout First Air Force, in any case, had limited access to the FAA's radar data from the nation's interior. Their entire system focused on detecting and tracking aircraft entering North America's airspace from overseas. It was virtually blind to flight activity within the continent leaving First Air Force unprepared to defend against attacks launched within the United States.

That morning's events unfolded rapidly and were extremely confusing. As unconfirmed reports about hijacked aircraft and other terrorist threats flooded into military command centers and the civilian media, tension and fear grew.

The Northeast Air Defense Sector happened to be participating in a semiannual exercise known as Vigilant Guardian, which according to ABC News, was designed to prepare for a Cold War-style Russian bomber attack. Therefore participants required emphatic commands that the hijackings were not part of the exercise. The defense sector, as a result, had a fully staffed command post including key officers and enlisted supervisors. Confronted by incomplete and often conflicting information, personnel at the Northeast Air Defense Sector and the rest of First Air Force relied on their professional skills while improvising responses to a nightmare scenario that few had predicted and no government organization, including the military, had prepared for.

Throughout that morning the FAA ordered civilian aircraft to land. Even before that, Colonel Duffy, a traditional

(i.e., part-time) Guardsman and civilian commercial airline pilot, and Major Nash established a combat air patrol over New York City and forced all nonmilitary aircraft to steer clear of the area. Someone they could not later recall directed them to shoot down any planes that failed to comply with their instructions to leave that airspace. Refueled by KC-135 Stratotankers from Maine's 101st Air Refueling Wing, the initial 102nd Fighter Wing's F-15s were later joined by others from their unit, plus Air Guard F-16s from Vermont's 158th Fighter Wing and New Jersey's 177th Fighter Wing. According to Colonel Duffy, the F-15s escorted about 100 aircraft out of the area before returning to Otis after more than five grueling hours on patrol over New York City.

At 9:09 a.m. the pilots of North Dakota Air Guard F-16s of the 119th Fighter Wing were standing by, ready



An Air National Guard F-16 on a combat air patrol over the burning Pentagon on September 11, 2001, after the hijacked Flight 77 crashed into it. (Gil Cohen, 9/11, National Guard Heritage Painting.)

to launch, at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, located about 130 miles southeast of Washington, DC. They were at their battle stations because of a growing general concern about the situation that morning. Seven minutes later the FAA reported that United Airlines Flight 93, outbound from Newark, New Jersey, to San Francisco, California, might also have been hijacked. The FAA notified the Northeast Air Defense Sector eight minutes later that American Flight 77, a flight from Dulles International Airport, Virginia, near Washington, DC, to Los Angeles, California, also appeared to be the victim of hijackers. At 9:24 a.m. Colonel Marr ordered three F-16s (two alert aircraft and a spare) scrambled from Langley to check out an unidentified intermittent aircraft track heading toward Washington,

DC. In six minutes the Langley F-16s were airborne.

In accordance with established NORAD procedures, the F-16s were initially directed to head northeast to

the 119th Fighter Wing were directed to fly at maximum subsonic speed, 660 miles per hour. At about 40 miles away, they saw the billowing smoke of American Airlines Flight 77, which

“Ready to go. We can adapt to any situation that comes up and can respond to protect this nation.”

avoid some of the most heavily traveled commercial airline routes rather than to fly directly to the Washington, DC, area. Major Dean Eckmann and Major Brad Derrig, plus Captain Craig Borgstrom of

had crashed into the Pentagon at 9:43 a.m. As the North Dakota Air Guardsmen neared Washington, DC, Major Eckmann, the flight lead, set up a patrol over the nation’s capital with the help of air traffic

controllers at the Northeast Air Defense Sector. They were warned that a fourth airliner, United Airlines Flight 93, was off course in the Cleveland, Ohio, area and not responding to FAA controllers.

During those first tension-filled minutes and hours after the terror attacks in 2001, two pilots in the Ohio Air National Guard's 180th Fighter Wing based at Toledo Express Airport received the order to fly and make sure every unauthorized aircraft complied with the order to land. "Generally, our mission is dropping bombs, laser-guided bombs, precision guided," said one of the pilots, Lieutenant Colonel Scott Reed. He had flown military jets for more than 20 years. Both he and Lieutenant Colonel Keith Newell, who also received the order, had their F-16s loaded with 500 rounds of 20-caliber ammunition for the M-61 cannon called The Vulcan, which fires about 100 rounds per second. If they encountered a plane that remained aloft, according to Reed, "We detach ourselves as much as we can and look at it as a technical problem to be solved." Fortunately, they did not have to shoot anything that day. During the mission, "I felt pretty good about what we were doing simply because it was the first time in my whole life that I was going to get to do what I thought was protect the homeland," said Newell. "Ready to go. We can adapt to any situation that comes up and can respond to protect this nation." New York Air Guard's 174th Fighter Wing at Syracuse also received an order to arm F-16s and get them airborne as soon as possible.

Neither unit was part of NORAD. However, Colonel Marr from the Northeast Air Defense Sector and Major General Larry Arnold, who commanded First Air Force and Continental NORAD Region, realized that they needed as many armed fighter aircraft airborne as soon as possible to deal with the rapidly

escalating crisis whose real extent was unknown at the time. Later, Colonel Marr emphasized that Flight 93 would have been shot down if it had tried to penetrate the Washington, DC, area. With the exception of the 102nd Fighter Wing on Cape Cod and the 119th Fighter Wing's alert detachment at Langley Air Force Base, none of the ANG units had been tasked to conduct

situation from watching live television coverage of the burning World Trade Center towers. Among his concerns, Air Force One was based at Andrews. Major Caine then called a Secret Service agent he knew who could not give him useful information. Shortly after, someone from the Secret Service telephoned Major Caine and asked if the DC Air Guard could launch armed fighter aircraft. He



Members of the 121st Fighter Squadron, 113th Wing, District of Columbia Air National Guard, September 11, 2001, prepare to load a missile on an F-16 at Andrews AFB, Maryland, in response to the terrorist attacks on the United States that took place earlier that day. (Courtesy of the 113th Wing.)

air defense operations on the morning of September 11th.

That morning, Major Dan Caine was serving as the supervisor of flying operations for the 121st Fighter Squadron of the District of Columbia's Air Guard located at Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, just east of the beltway that encircles Washington, DC. Although a general purpose fighter unit whose pilots were trained in defensive counter air tactics as part of their mission responsibilities, the 121st was not part of the nation's air defense alert force. Caine knew of the

checked with his boss, Brigadier General David Wherle, commander of the 113th Wing. Next he directed personnel at the unit's munitions dump on the other side of the base to begin uncrating bullets and missiles so they could be moved to the flight line. Caine then received a call from an unidentified individual at the White House requesting that his unit place armed fighter aircraft over Washington, DC. That order, confirmed by the Secret Service, represented the unit's first official tasking to defend the nation's capital. During the call, he



Staff Sergeant John K. Miller, (left), Technical Sergeant Yusuf S. Abdullah, and Staff Sergeant Lorenzo Parnell, (right), 113th Security Forces Squadron, District of Columbia Air National Guard, double check the weapons inventory as they prepare for deployment to Bolling AFB, Washington DC. The 113th will augment the active duty security forces. The activation of the 113th was part of the heightened security after September 11, 2001. (Photographer: MSgt Sean M. Brennan. Air Force Photo.)

heard Vice President Dick Cheney talking in the background.

President Bush was in Florida, and Vice President Cheney gave the military authority to shoot down any other hijacked civilian aircraft that terrorists attempted to use as manned guided missiles. The 121st sent up a series of F-16s. Two, flown by Lieutenant Colonel Marc Sasseville and Captain Heather Penney, had no time to arm before launching, and only carried training bullets. Later the DC Air Guard pilots reluctantly admitted that if their training ammunition had been unable to bring down a hijacked aircraft, they were ready to ram it. They established a low level combat air patrol over Washington unaware of the presence in the area of the North Dakota Air Guardsmen. The DC Guardsmen communicated with FAA controllers, using different radio frequencies than the North Dakota Guardsmen, who received direction from the Northeast

Air Defense Sector. Fortunately, the North Dakotans patrolled at a higher altitude than the 121st fighters, and over a different part of the Washington area.

Several minutes after Sasseville and Penney took off, Caine and Captain Brandon Rasmussen launched their fighters from Andrews Air Force Base with hot guns and AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles. They established radio contact with both the FAA controllers and the North Dakota Air Guardsmen. Later that day ANG F-16s from the 192nd Fighter Wing at Richmond, Virginia, and the 177th Fighter Wing at Atlantic City, New Jersey, joined them. The ANG KC-135s from the 108th Air Refueling Wing, New Jersey ANG; and the 121st Air Refueling Wing, Ohio ANG, serviced them as well as Air Force, Marine Corps, and Navy fighters, KC-10s, and Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. At one point that day, there were as

many as 12 fighter aircraft airborne over the nation's capital. Working with AWACS, the Northeast Air Defense Sector, and FAA air traffic controllers, the pilots maintained a coordinated system of defensive patrols over the nation's capital on that terrible day.

The air crew of a Minnesota ANG C-130 from the 133rd Airlift Wing had been diverted from Andrews Air Force Base to check out reports of an unidentified aircraft heading south toward Washington, DC, above the Potomac River. To the crew's horror, they saw American Airlines Flight 77 crash into the Pentagon. They then turned back toward the west. As they flew over southwestern Pennsylvania, the pilots witnessed the fourth hijacked airliner, United Flight 93, crashing after its passengers apparently overwhelmed the terrorists controlling the aircraft. General Arnold was not informed of the presidential authority to shoot Flight 93 down until about five minutes after it crashed.

While communications failures, among other problems, prevented the military from deflecting the actual hijackings, the armed forces reacted quickly once they realized that the United States was under attack. First Air Force and the Air Guard adapted rapidly on September 11, 2001. The ANG Director, Major General Paul A. Weaver Jr. activated the Air Guard's Crisis Action Team at Andrews Air Force Base that morning. Along with the Continental NORAD Region and its three sector operations centers, the Crisis Action Team contacted ANG fighter, tanker, and airlift units across the country to prepare as many aircraft as they could as quickly as possible to defend the nation. The Air National Guard's Crisis Action Team formed the central point of contact assisting the mobilization, coordination, and monitoring of ANG resources

worldwide for emergency missions concerning natural and manmade disasters including terrorism.

Across the United States scores of traditional Air Guard members either contacted their units to see if they could help or just showed up. Within an hour after the World Trade Center attacks, for example, Scotia, New York's 2nd Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team (WMD-CST or CST) assembled with its equipment at Stratton ANG Base. By 8:30 p.m. that same day, this team of specially trained Air and Army Guardsmen had flown to Manhattan, approximately 170 miles away, and set up operations near what became known as Ground Zero. The CSTs began in the 1990s to assist localities during natural disasters and terrorist attacks. The 2nd Civil Support Team became the first of those teams to deploy in a real crisis. The unit, augmented by two members of a Minnesota National Guard CST, continued operations in Manhattan through mid-September, 2001.

Because no preexisting priority list existed of cities, military installations, nuclear power plants, and other key

phone calls from installation commanders demanding protection, as well as contend with confusing information regarding 21 commercial aircraft that acted suspiciously.

Protection for President Bush was an unquestioned priority. When the terrorists struck New York City and Washington, DC, he was in Sarasota, Florida, reading a story to elementary school children. First Air Force repositioned an Air Force E-3 AWACS aircraft on a training mission off the Florida coast so that it could cover Air Force One and then the Secret Service put General Arnold's command in charge of protecting the president. With the decision to send the president aloft, the Southeast Air Defense Sector scrambled four armed F-16s from the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Fighter Wing to escort Air Force One as it flew to Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, its first stop. Next the president flew to Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. Once General Arnold confirmed that the last of the 21 suspicious airline flights was safely on the ground, President Bush returned to Washington. Air National Guard aircraft from Louisiana's 122nd

other responsible military organizations and civilian governmental agencies. In addition, it maintained positive command and control of an expanded air defense system that now included the interior of the continental United States. The First Air Force air operations center also grew from 38 to 160 people, and its personnel, primarily Air Guardsmen, worked long days, seven days a week, until help arrived from active duty Air Force organizations. By December 2001 more than 350 military personnel staffed the center.

To further expand the reach of First Air Force throughout the continental United States, it established data links with FAA radars and sent air controllers from the Air Force, ANG, and other branches of the armed forces to 21 civilian air traffic control centers. In addition, mobile radar units were dispatched to fill critical coverage gaps in the nation's heartland. Federal Aviation Administration centers installed voice communications links that could alert First Air Force quickly to new emerging threats over the United States. This also enabled the FAA to talk to almost any plane flying in the nation's airspace.

Air National Guard and Air Force aircraft were joined by Navy fighter and E-2 surveillance aircraft to help protect New York City and Washington, DC. U.S. Customs Service P-3s as well as five Navy Aegis cruisers and two destroyers augmented the air surveillance network. Their task had been greatly eased because the government officially prohibited all civilian air traffic within the U.S. borders. All military flying, except air defense missions, was likewise terminated.

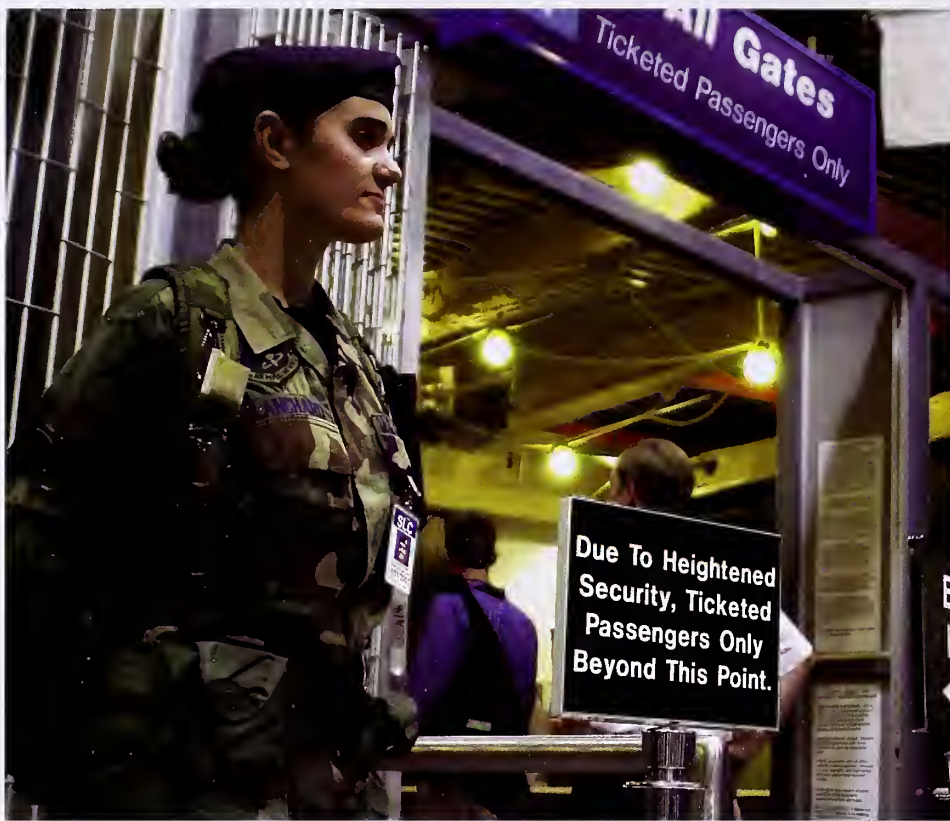
During the first 24 hours of the crisis, 34 Air Guard fighter units flew 179 missions. Eighteen tanker units generated 78 aircraft in the same time period. Through September 28, for example, Alabama's 117th Air Refueling

During the first 24 hours of the crisis, 34 Air Guard fighter units flew 179 missions.

places to defend, initially General Arnold and his staff at First Air Force nominated the areas. They gave priority to protecting major U.S. population centers, and General Ralph E. Eberhart, NORAD's commander in chief, quickly approved those suggestions. While improvising a defense of the airspace within the continental U.S. on September 11th, First Air Force also had to field irate

Fighter Squadron, Iowa's 174th Fighter Squadron, and the District of Columbia's 121st Fighter Squadron joined the Texans at various times protecting Air Force One until its return to Andrews Air Force Base.

Meanwhile, acting under General Eberhart's authority, First Air Force built and published air tasking orders and established communications with



Senior Airmen Emery Blanchard, 151st Security Forces Squadron, Utah Air National Guard, guards the Salt Lake City International Airport. The unit was called up and stationed at the airport as part of the increased vigilance and readiness encompassed in Operation Noble Eagle, September 30, 2001. (Photographer: MSgt Mark Savage, USAF. Air Force Photo.)

Wing kept aircraft aloft on a continuous basis. Air National Guard units also contributed 111 C-130 aircraft, and more than 3,000 ANG security forces personnel supported the mission. At General Weaver's direction, 88 ANG flying units established 24-hour command posts during that period. Physical security was increased at all Air Guard units to protect them against potential terrorist attacks. All of that was accomplished initially not only by full-time ANG support personnel, but by traditional Air Guardsmen on a volunteer basis without their units being mobilized for federal service by the president or Congress. Senior Guard leaders assumed that the necessary paperwork and funding for such emergency actions would catch up with their organizations later. Overall, the U.S. air defense network expanded to nearly 300 aircraft on alert at 26 locations within 18 hours of the terrorist

attacks and First Air Force maintained 16 separate continuous fighter orbits for three days.

In addition to fighters and tankers, the Air Guard's airlift, security forces, civil engineering, combat communications, aeromedical, and rescue units were also heavily involved in America's initial military responses to the terrorist attacks. Within hours of the hijack notifications, Air Guard airlift C-5s, C-130s, and C-141s were transporting Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) personnel, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents, human organ and blood supplies, and National Guard Civil Support Teams to various communities across the country. Some 70 ANG security forces units were activated and hundreds of civil engineers were called up. ANG rescue personnel also became involved. Moreover, at least six combat communications units

prepared to operate three sites and 70 aeromedical crews were placed on alert. According to Colonel William Scott U.S. Air Force (Ret) and special assistant to General Arnold:

"For about nine days we held on by our fingernails, never missed an air tasking push order, never missed an air space control order push. The issue was not our capability, it was our sustainability.... Our kids had been literally getting no sleep. They were working 18 hours per day or more because of the level of effort that we were putting into defending the air spaces, and many of them were at the limit of exhaustion."

On September 20, 2001, President Bush told a televised joint session of Congress and the American people that Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda network were responsible for the recent terrorist attacks on the United States. Accusing Afghanistan's Taliban regime of sheltering bin Laden and his organization, the president demanded that they immediately turn him over to American authorities and dismantle every terrorist camp in their country or face a military onslaught by the United States. The president summoned the nation to launch a protracted "global war against terrorism." Using broad rhetorical strokes, President Bush described a titanic struggle between civilization and radical Islam. He went beyond that theme emphasizing that, "Our war on terror will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."

Operation Noble Eagle

As a result of the September 11, 2001 (9/11), attacks, homeland defense became the top national defense priority. The

enhanced defense of North America and military support to civilian government agencies, known as Operation Noble Eagle, began early the next day when General Eberhart, NORAD commander in chief, issued the execution order. On September 14, President Bush declared a national emergency and made members of the nation's Ready Reserve subject to federal service for as long as two years. Although part of a total force effort that included elements of other services and even NATO AWACS aircraft, the Air National Guard provided the largest portion of the vastly strengthened continental air defense system under Operation Noble Eagle.

A week after the attacks, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld announced the call up of over more than 5,000 members of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve to support the nation's increased security requirements. On September 22, the president mobilized about 5,100 more members of the air reserve components, including approximately 3,000 air refueling and about 130 security specialists. Guardsmen gained national visibility starting September 27, when President Bush asked the governors for their temporary help at commercial airports, which had reopened a few days after 9/11 with new security restrictions. In the airports they would "Temporarily augment the civilian airport security function of the nation's commercial airports with a trained, armed, and highly visible military presence." For more than seven months, several thousand Guardsmen performed those security duties, with additional Guardsmen called into service during the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year holiday period. Although the Army Guard provided the vast majority of the enhanced airport security force, several hundred Air National Guard personnel also participated.

The Air Guard security forces also protected Air Force bases in the United States and overseas. However, the Air Force did not agree for several months that ANG installations contributed critical assets in the war against terrorism and required stronger protection. Air National Guard officials pointed out that the American people and their elected representatives would be appalled by televised images of burning aircraft destroyed by terrorists on poorly defended ANG bases. Eventually those bases received greater security and in December 2002, approximately 9,000 Army Guardsmen were mobilized to strengthen security at 163 Air Force installations in the United States.

Operation Noble Eagle took a heavy toll on the Air Guard. In mid-October 2001, General Arnold told a reporter

required training. Some of the participating Air Guard fighter units burned up about 1,000 flying hours during the first 30 days of Noble Eagle, whereas, during ordinary peacetime training, those units typically would fly around 3,000 hours per year. Furthermore, the increased flight time created huge increases in aircraft maintenance requirements.

Anticipating that the constant alerts would continue into the winter, the ANG civil engineers in the National Guard Bureau used emergency procedures, to conduct environmental impact studies, obtain funding, and award contracts for \$35 million to build 42 temporary and permanent aircraft shelters and support facilities on bases in Maryland, New Jersey, Colorado, Vermont, Texas, California, North Dakota, Louisiana,



F-16s of the 119th Fighter Wing, North Dakota Air National Guard, fly a combat air patrol over Washington, DC, and the Pentagon in Operation Noble Eagle. November 2001. (Air National Guard Photo.)

the combination of combat air patrols and the 24/7 "alerts"* at 26 bases placed a great deal of stress on the fighter forces assigned to the operation. Fighter pilots, for example, could not maintain their

Massachusetts, Oregon, and Virginia. Among their challenges the civil engineers had to overcome bureaucratic hurdles like gaining waivers of certain fire protection standards for hangars. Such

* See Chapter 1



Master Sergeant Franklin Buzby (left), Technical Sergeant Wendell Hunte (center) and Senior Airman Tina Ghaffins (right) from the Aircraft Generation Squadron, 177th Fighter Wing, New Jersey Air National Guard, use a Universal Ammunition Loader to load 20mm rounds used in the F-16C Block 25. The Wing was flying combat air patrol missions during Operation Noble Eagle. (Photographer: MSgt Tom Louis. Courtesy of 177th Fighter Wing.)

strict enforcement at that time suggested that not everyone in the Department of Defense and the Air Force had quickly adjusted their thinking to meet emergency wartime requirements. Nevertheless, alert shelters were completed in northern tier states by January 2002 while they finished those in milder climates by April.

The Air Guard's civil engineers had been heavily involved in Operation Noble Eagle from the start. To assist in recovery operations at the World Trade Center, more than 150 of their number from New York were activated. They operated heavy equipment and supported the fire fighters. In addition, 805 Air Guard civil engineer personnel maintained critical infrastructure and provided emergency services around-the-clock for the air sovereignty alert mission at 20 installations.

The enhanced continental air defense operation represented a major portion of the significant strengthening of the military defenses of the continental United States as a result of the terrorist

attacks on September 11th. Shortly before that date the Air Force anticipated a significant cutback because of Secretary Rumsfeld's transformation policy, and because he did not foresee any significant threat to the United States. However, the redrafted Quadrennial Defense Review released by the Pentagon on October 1, 2001, designated homeland defense as the nation's new top military mission. Consequently, in January 2002, NORAD increased the number of air defense alert sites. The Air Guard ran continuous round-the-clock combat air patrols over New York City and Washington, DC, until spring 2002. In addition, when key events occurred such as the Winter Olympics in Utah, space shuttle launches, baseball's World Series and football's Super Bowl, similar air patrols helped provide security. The Air Guard also flew random patrols over various urban areas, nuclear power plants, weapons storage facilities and laboratories.

By mid-April 2002, ANG and Air Force pilots had flown more than 20,000

NORAD missions compared to only 150 during 2000. As early as January 2002 senior Air Force officials began searching for a politically acceptable way to end the constant airborne patrols over key American cities. That proved politically dicey given repeated Bush administration warnings about the continuing threats posed by terrorists. Nevertheless, General John Jumper, the Air Force Chief of Staff, warned about the heavy burdens those patrols were placing on the service's personnel, their readiness for other missions, the availability of training funds, and the projected life spans of participating aircraft. In late February 2002 Secretary of the Air Force James Roche noted that the air patrols tied down approximately 265 aircraft and 12,000 airmen. With some 14,000 airmen involved in the war in Afghanistan, the burden was especially heavy. Secretary Roche suggested eliminating continuous patrols over Washington, DC, and New York City plus the daily patrols over other cities to alleviate those stresses. Instead, he encouraged putting more fighters on "ground alert" for emergencies.

Because estimates of the nation's security situation became more optimistic that spring 2002, the Air Force eliminated the continuous patrols and substituted random ones. In addition, Secretary Rumsfeld and the Joint Chiefs of Staff decided to implement Secretary Roche's suggestion with a flexible, tiered alert program. First Air Force also added the responsibility for policing and defending the airspace within the United States to its established role of protecting the nation from external aircraft threats. Although the active duty Air Force also played a significant role, the primary burden of increased domestic air defense fell on the Air National Guard. The ANG, concerned it might be reduced to a strictly homeland defense force, wanted to insure the Guard remained an integral component of a full spectrum expeditionary air force



A Florida Air National Guard F-15A Eagle aircraft assigned to the 125th Fighter Wing flies a Combat Air Patrol mission over Cape Kennedy, Florida, for Operation Noble Eagle. The Space Shuttle Endeavor is positioned on the launch pad, November 29, 2001. (Photographer: TSgt Shaun Withers, USAF Air Force Photo.)

including having its fighter units become more heavily engaged in ongoing offensive operations overseas.

By late 2003 America's continental air defense posture had changed dramatically from September 11, 2001. Heavily armed fighters capable of launching within minutes sat alert around the United States. Prior to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Air Force's domestic emergency defense consisted of only 14 ANG fighter aircraft with no dedicated support from either tankers or AWACS planes. After September 11th, at least 35 fighters (mostly ANG), two E-3 AWACS aircraft, and eight tankers stood available to defend the nation at any moment. First Air Force expanded its surveillance system to include data from Federal Aviation Administration radar that covered some three million square miles of U.S. airspace including

the nation's interior. Augmenting that coverage were radar data from AWACS and tethered aerostat balloons along the nation's southern border. Several times every week, NORAD conducted exercises on dealing with hijacked airliners that included simulated shoot downs. While no other hijackings occurred, between September 11, 2001, and June 26, 2004, jet fighters were scrambled or diverted over 1,500 times to intercept planes that raised security alarms in the United States. Many of those incidents involved small, private aircraft whose pilots inadvertently violated airspace restrictions.

In June 2004 an incident occurred prior to former President Ronald Reagan's funeral in Washington, DC, that underscored lingering concerns about the adequacy of the nation's air defense. That day an unidentified aircraft penetrated so

deeply into Washington's no-fly zone that the Capitol building, where a large crowd awaited the arrival of President Reagan's coffin, was evacuated. According to news accounts, General Eberhart came close to ordering it shot down. The aircraft landed at Reagan National Airport before it could be identified by intercepting Air Guard F-16s from Andrews Air Force Base. The aircraft, a Beechcraft King Air turboprop, turned out to be carrying Governor Ernie Fletcher of Kentucky to the funeral. Although the aircraft's transponder had only been working intermittently, the pilot convinced FAA to let it fly from Kentucky and land at National Airport, which had been closed to private aircraft since September 11, 2001. Air traffic controllers responsible for the National Airport area, not knowing the situation, reported the unknown aircraft in restricted space. Although tragedy was narrowly averted, the episode highlighted continuing flaws in the enhanced air defense system.

Pentagon officials acknowledged that the Air Guard had carried the major share of the increased air defense responsibilities under Noble Eagle. They considered the ANG the right organization to carry those burdens because of the wide geographic dispersal of its units and its long-standing participation in the homeland defense mission. But they emphasized that homeland defense would not become an exclusive ANG mission; active force flying units would also participate in surge air patrols and alert requirements. However in March 2003, the United States, which had been engaged in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) since October 2001, went to war in a second theater, Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom). Those conflicts and ANG's continued presence supporting expeditionary forces around the globe, plus continued homeland defense, would challenge the Air National Guard as it rounded out its first sixty years. ❧

WARS



WITHOUT END

On June 8, 2004, the Air National Guard (ANG) Senior Scout crew of Combined Joint Task Force—76 Operations set out from Karshi-Khanaba Air Base, Uzbekistan. The Senior Scout surveillance system monitored radio signals and was carried by a C-130. The crew headed for Zabul and Oruzgun provinces in south-central Afghanistan. That nation's elections were scheduled to take place in September and Afghanistan's former leaders, the Taliban, were instigating violence in order to undermine that nation's fledgling democracy.

To threaten the stability and security of the provinces, Taliban leader Mullah Dadullah called upon 500 to 800 fighters to demoralize the United States Marines, other coalition members, and United Nations election workers, and counter any efforts to disarm and contain the antigovernment forces.

The task force consisted of members of the 169th Intelligence Squadron (Utah), the 197th Intelligence Squadron (Nevada), both ANG, and the 97th Intelligence Squadron, U.S. Air Force. Previously, a Senior Scout mission helped thwart a plan to poison the water supply at Kandahar Air Base, Afghanistan. On that day, as on most of its missions, the crew supported the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit. The Senior Scout established contact with the Marines only to find them surrounded by more than 120 anticoalition militia. From the time reinforcements were on their way and for several hours thereafter, the crew pinpointed the enemies' locations for the Marines and their rescuers. At the end of the mission, more than 80 enemy combatants lay dead and an additional number had been captured. Three Afghan coalition fighters died and five Marines received non-life-threatening injuries. According to Brigadier

At the end of the mission, more than 80 enemy combatants lay dead and an additional number had been captured.

General Norman Sipe, Deputy Combined Forces Air Component Commander, "Your support directly contributed to our ability to identify, close with, and destroy our enemies." The 22nd Marines were more emphatic. When asked if the Senior Scout crew provided essential support, the Marines responded, "Hell, yes!"



Personnel assigned to the 321st Air Expeditionary Squadron offload supplies from a C-130H Hercules aircraft assigned to the 187th Airlift Wing, Wyoming Air National Guard, at Kandahar, Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photographer: TSgt Marvin Preston, USAF) LEFT: A-10 fighter pilot Major Jim Ewald, 172nd Fighter Squadron, 110th Fighter Wing, Michigan Air National Guard, was shot down and recovered during Operation Iraqi Freedom, April 8, 2003. (Air Force Photo.)

The June 8, 2004, rescue illustrated the kind of support the Air National Guard provided for wars in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) and Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom). In addition

of the Air Force indicative of the 21st century total force.

Operation Enduring Freedom

On March 4, 2003, pararescueman Tech Sergeant Keary Miller of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, Kentucky ANG, participated in one of the bloodiest small-unit battles in the "global war on terrorism." It was part of Operation Anaconda, the largest offensive since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom. Congress authorized sending U.S. military forces to the Afghan region September 14, 2001, because reconnaissance missions over Afghanistan had found al Qaeda training camps within that country.

Historically, Afghanistan was regarded by many as the worst place on Earth to fight a war. The country, roughly the size of Texas, had an inhospitable climate and

to the heavy demands placed on the ANG by those conflicts and Operation Noble Eagle protecting the United States, Air Guardsmen continued supporting other Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF)* commitments around the globe. The Senior Scout mission also illustrated the cooperation between different components

* See Chapter II regarding the AEF concept.



Map of Afghanistan (Central Intelligence Agency).

a rugged topography. The tribes that lived there were known not to run from a good fight. In the southern third of the country, the landscape contained a desert-like plateau where nomads and others scampered freely across the Afghan-Pakistan border in both directions. The central two-thirds of the country contained the Hindu Kush Mountains, a chain almost 1,000 miles long and 200 miles wide. The mountains ran from the northeast out of northern Pakistan to the southwest into Iran. The ranges contained more than 20 peaks higher than 23,000 feet above sea level with deep valleys in between. Afghanistan had only 16 miles of railroad and its roads were in less-than-desirable condition. The land was hard, and so were the lessons learned

from previous invaders of that land such as Genghis Khan, Great Britain under Queen Victoria, and the Russians under Leonid Brezhnev. Taking place on Takur Ghar, a snowcapped, 10,200-foot mountain where temperatures at the top reached 40 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and dropped to a negative five at night, the harsh combat conditions of that battle reminded men like Sergeant Miller of the value of his realistic training over the years. Miller's lifesaving skills were put to the ultimate test during that fierce battle.

For Operation Anaconda, its commander, Army Major General Franklin L. Hagenbeck, directed coalition forces, U.S. soldiers and Afghan forces, to destroy remaining al Qaeda and Taliban forces in

an area located roughly 65 nautical miles south of the Afghan capital, Kabul. One reconnaissance team in two helicopters landed on Takur Ghar. One helicopter carried a Navy SEAL team and an Air Force combat controller, Tech Sergeant John Chapman. As the SEAL team disembarked, automatic weapons fire laced the helicopter's side while a rocket propelled grenade ripped into it. The crew chief yelled, "We're taking fire! Go! Go! Go!" and the SEAL team rushed back inside. As the pilots added power to evade the heavy ground fire, the damaged helicopter bucked violently, causing Navy SEAL Petty Officer Neil Roberts, who was standing on the ramp, to fall about 12 feet to the ground below. The helicopter escaped the ambush and crash-landed about seven kilometers north of where Petty Officer Roberts fell.

The second helicopter rescued the other SEALs and Sergeant Chapman but after returning to their base, they decided to try and rescue Petty Officer Roberts. Regardless of the danger they knew the al Qaeda would treat Roberts badly and time was running out for him. Despite intense ground fire, the six men successfully returned to Takur Ghar. Nevertheless, the battle continued and Sergeant Chapman was killed along with several enemy fighters. Surrounded by gunfire, the men on the ground called upon a Quick Reaction Force (QRF), designed for such emergencies. Those forces consisted of 23 men and two helicopters. The team included Sergeant Miller. "We were notified that we would be launching in 45 minutes," he recalled, "and were going into [an al Qaeda and Taliban] infested area." Also on the team were Army Rangers. During Operation Enduring Freedom, Rangers and special operations formed the focal point of the U.S. ground campaign. Sourced from special operations forces throughout the U.S. military and from the Special Air Services of Great Britain and Australia, those forces organized the Afghan resistance

and directed punishing air strikes against the Taliban and al Qaeda.

Because of communications failures, the Quick Reaction Force landed in the same spot as the previous helicopters and, like them, was greeted with gunfire. Miller's helicopter managed to land, and the QRF called in close air support. For the next five and a half hours, they battled with the enemy. Three Rangers died and others were wounded.

According to Sergeant Miller, "We continued to treat the patients, continued moving ammunition and grenades to where they were needed. I grabbed a radio ... and set up satellite communication and then returned to the rear." Sergeant Miller and Airman Jason Cunningham, like Miller, a pararescueman, worked hard

to keep the patients from succumbing to hypothermia. They put them in the helicopter and removed its insulation and wrapped it around the wounded Rangers. In addition, they used the majority of the fluids available in the medical kits and anything else, including the heaters packed in their food rations. With the help of the additional Rangers and more air strikes, they took the hill, killing many al Qaeda combatants. They also recovered the bodies of Petty Officer Roberts and Sergeant Chapman.

Approximately 10 minutes after the Rangers took control of the hill, they began to receive more frequent enemy mortar and automatic weapons fire. Although combat air support prevailed, the enemy wounded an Army medic and fatally wounded

Airman Cunningham. At that point the Quick Reaction Force had 11 wounded and seven dead. After 17 hours on the mountaintop, a nighttime rescue took place and the ordeal was over. Operation Anaconda continued for another 19 days.

Although the exploits of one Air Guardsman in Takur Ghar may hold limited significance in the overall history of Operation Enduring Freedom, that battle illustrated the ability of Air Guardsmen to actively contribute to a vital U.S. military operation. Moreover, the battle on Takur Ghar demonstrated that members of the Air National Guard could perform tasks equally as well as active duty airmen. On November 1, 2003, Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche awarded Sergeant Miller the



Paktia Province, Afghanistan, March 4, 2002, Technical Sergeant Keary Miller of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, Kentucky National Guard, not only managed to drag a wounded helicopter pilot to safety at Taka Ghar, but also orchestrated the establishment of multiple casualty collection points. In between treating the wounded, Miller set up the distribution of ammunition for the Army Rangers who were taking the fight to the enemy. For his extraordinary life-saving efforts while putting himself in extreme danger under enemy fire, Sergeant Miller was awarded the Silver Star. (Keith Rocco, The Battle of Takur Ghar, National Guard Heritage Painting.)



A US Air Force F-16C Fighting Falcon, 174th Fighter Wing, New York Air National Guard, Syracuse, New York, in flight over Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. The aircraft is armed with AIM-120A Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles on each wing tip, a pair of GBU-12 500-pound bombs (left), a 370-gallon tank. It also has an AN/AAQ-28(V) LITENING II targeting pod under the intake, November 29, 2003. (Photographer: SSgt Suzanne M. Jenkins, USAF. Air Force Photo.)

Silver Star for his bravery under fire.

The battle of Takur Ghar exemplified only one small instance of Air National Guard participation in the war in Afghanistan. However, the Guard's role in

of the most extensive operations in Air Force history. Furthermore, the Air Force met the logistical needs of that operation despite the severe shortage of strategic airlift and troublesome maintenance needs

received orders by September 20, 2001, to be in their deployed locations before the start of their air bridge operations. Some ANG tanker units also flew humanitarian support missions. By using European bases, the Air Force could transfer cargo from the larger aircraft to smaller planes, refuel aircraft on the ground, exchange flight crews, give crews rest opportunities, and repair broken aircraft.

Air National Guard cargo planes also worked close to combat operations. By March 2002 ANG C-130 units had flown 55 percent of the missions for the Afghanistan war.

Operation Enduring Freedom expanded continuously from 2001 to 2004 in terms of the number of personnel and the capabilities deployed. The ANG was involved even before the fighting in Afghanistan began. With the war imminent, the Air Force quickly established an airlift operations plan that included active duty, Guard, and Reserve components. It became one

of the older planes.

Shortly after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 (9/11) and weeks before the first U.S. bomb was dropped over Afghanistan, the Air Force established air bridges to help funnel material and personnel overseas to support multiple operations in conjunction with Enduring Freedom. Air National Guard tanker units

Strategic airlift planes such as the Lockheed C-141B Starlifter, the Lockheed C-5 Galaxy, the Boeing C-17 Globemaster III, and civilian wide-body airliners were the workhorses for carrying America's war machine overseas. The Air Guard contributed two Starlifter units, the 155th Airlift Squadron, 164th Airlift Wing, Tennessee ANG, and the 183rd Airlift Squadron, 172nd Airlift Wing, Mississippi ANG, to the strategic airlift mission. The Air Guard's sole C-5 unit, the 137th Airlift Squadron, 105th Airlift Wing, Newburgh, New York, also contributed to the operation. Through

the ANG's airlift participation in Europe, the Air Force's C-17s could support Enduring Freedom directly.

When the war began, only Air Guard units assigned to Air Force Special Operations Command deployed directly to Afghanistan to support combat operations. Typically, ANG Special Forces units in 13-man teams first went to active duty bases in the United States, and later to overseas locations.

The 169th Fighter Wing, South Carolina ANG, was the first ANG fighter unit to deploy to Southwest Asia in direct support of the air war over Afghanistan. It sent over 200 personnel and six F-16Cs in January 2002 to Al Udeid Air Base in Doha, Qatar, to assist air combat operations over Afghanistan. In particular, they provided Joint Direct Attack Munitions against Taliban and al Qaeda positions, the only Air Force fighter unit in the theater to do so. F-16s sometimes were also configured for Cluster Bomb Units. In addition, F-16 pilots sometimes fired their 20mm gun against ground targets. Missions could last up to 10 hours with 10 to 15 air refuelings. After so many hours strapped in their seats, pilots generally received one to three days of crew rest. The unit returned to South Carolina April 3, 2002.

Pennsylvania ANG's 103rd Fighter Squadron, 111th Fighter Wing, became the first A-10 ANG unit to deploy directly to Afghanistan. From December 2002 to January 2003, the 111th Fighter Wing deployed personnel and sent its aircraft to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.

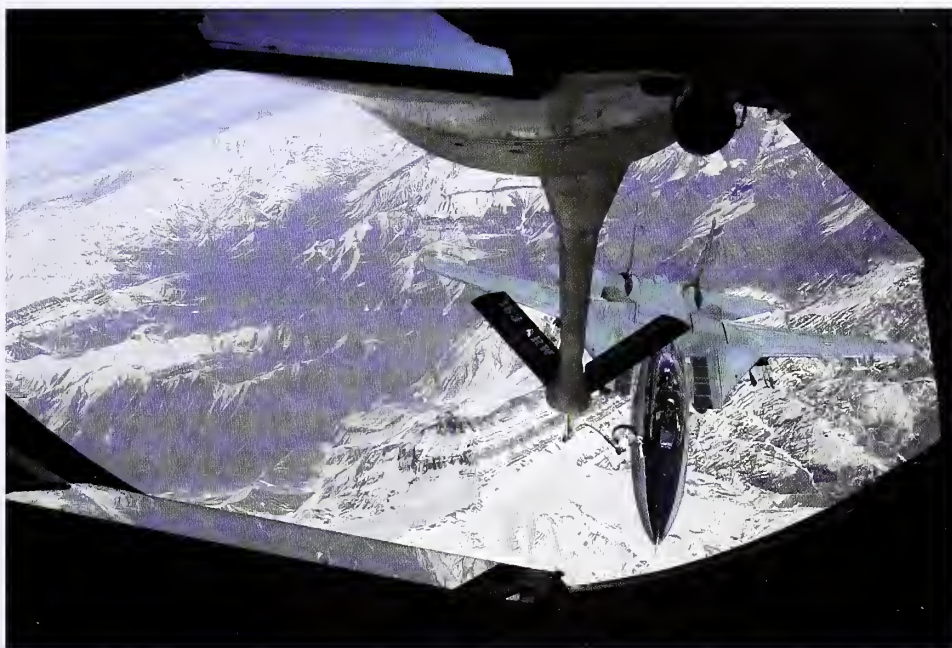
In March 2003 the Air National Guard deployed all six of its A-10 units overseas for combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Five units went to Iraq; only the 104th Fighter Squadron in Maryland's 175th Wing deployed to Afghanistan. While there, it flew all the A-10 combat missions for Operation Enduring Freedom.

Without the support of air refueling tankers, fighter planes could not have

carried out their lengthy missions. According to one historian of air warfare, aerial refueling formed the core of any modern air combat operation. The Air Force had two weapons systems dedicated to aerial refueling: the McDonnell Douglas KC-10 Extender and the venerable Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker, the primary enabler for Air Force air combat operations. Usually, the KC-135 performed air bridge operations supporting strategic airlift, bombers, and fighter aircraft deploying into a theater of operations. They also provided air refueling support for attack aircraft like the 169th's F-16s, and other support

flown 55 percent of the missions for the Afghanistan war. Typically, ANG C-130 crews flying into dangerous environments executed an "Engine Running Offload" or combat offload. That meant the pilots kept the engines on while the crews swiftly rolled supplies out the back of the airplanes. Using that method, the planes spent the least amount of time on the ground, thereby, reducing their vulnerability to ground fire and providing the highest chance to escape successfully if any trouble occurred.

The 193rd Special Operations Wing, Pennsylvania, using the EC-130E aircraft, performed an unusual mission



A KC-135R assigned to the 195th Air Refueling Squadron, 163rd Air Refueling Wing, California Air National Guard, is refueling a US Navy F-14A Tomcat over northern Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom, April 11, 2003. (Photographer: Paul Farley, Civilian, U.S. Navy. U.S. Navy Photo.)

aircraft flying missions in the combat zone. KC-10 or KC-135 air refueling tankers dragged the 169th F-16s throughout their flights over Afghanistan, except over actual combat areas. Without the fighters' ability to stay aloft for hours, and without the air bridge support provided by those tankers, the war in Afghanistan would not have been possible to execute.

Air National Guard cargo planes also worked close to combat operations. By March 2002 ANG C-130 units had

in Afghanistan: psychological operations. Since 1968, the 193rd had been handling airborne psychological missions. The EC-130E acquired the mission name Commando Solo during the 1990s, when the aircraft was modified to handle color television operations. One of the first ANG flying units deployed to the area, the 193rd began transmitting by the end of October 2001. For almost six months the unit relayed broadcasts of Voice of America in the Dari and Pashtu languages

and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Uzbek, Tajik, and Persian. According to a White House spokesman, the Commando Solo missions gave the Afghan people “full knowledge about what is happening in Afghanistan from a source other than a repressive Taliban regime.” The 193rd remained in the region until ground psychological warfare operations stations were safely established.

Pilots are the Air Force and Air Guard’s elite, but personnel on the ground also performed functions essential to combat. Among the most significant on the ground were the civil engineers assigned to the Rapid Engineer Deployable—Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer (RED HORSE) teams. Originating in the Vietnam conflict, their arsenal consisted of weapons, vehicles, equipment, vehicle maintenance, food service, supplies, and medical equipment. As their primary mission, RED HORSE teams assessed, planned, and established facilities and infrastructures to support both domestic and overseas operations. They deployed quickly into remote, high threat environments to provide rapid damage and requirements assessments, heavy damage repair, build base camps, and conduct other engineering and construction projects such as aircraft parking ramps and munitions pads. Those units provided the Air Force with a highly mobile civil engineer response force to support operations worldwide.

The ANG had six RED HORSE units assigned while the active duty had four, and the Air Force Reserve had two. Air Force RED HORSE support for Operation Enduring Freedom consisted of constructing new airfields for future air operations and repairing facilities that had deteriorated. Beginning in mid-April 2002 ANG RED HORSE units deployed to various overseas bases to support the Afghanistan War. The Air Force tasked an estimated \$100 million worth of projects to RED HORSE units that year. Those



Iraq map. (Central Intelligence Agency.)

projects included an aircraft hangar, fire station, taxiway repairs, site work, support facilities, and a vehicle search area at three Southwest Asia air bases. Notwithstanding the large influx of civilian construction contractors working in Southwest Asia, RED HORSE remained the primary enabler in the largest military construction effort since the Vietnam War. In one instance the security situation at an Afghan base was so precarious, that runway repairs had to take place at night. Air National Guard RED HORSE personnel wearing night vision goggles successfully poured concrete in complete darkness. The experience in Operation Enduring Freedom reminded senior Air Force planners that the Air Guard’s RED HORSE units were equally as capable as their active duty equivalents. Because many ANG and Air Reserve personnel performed the same jobs in their civilian careers, perhaps, they were

even more skilled and more experienced than their active duty counterparts. Air National Guard civil engineers provided 40 percent of the total Air Force Civil Engineer forces in Afghanistan by 2004.

Members of another ground-based ANG unit proved essential in Afghanistan: tactical air controllers embedded with the Army ground forces. The application of air power to support the ground war could not have been accomplished without their skills. All but one of the Air Support Operations Squadrons assigned to the Air National Guard were deployed for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2003. According to their After Action Report they supported 100 percent of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force—Afghanistan requests for forces and supported Special Forces units with conventional tactical air controllers.

Operation Iraqi Freedom benefited

from Enduring Freedom's experience. However, once the Iraq conflict began, in March 2003, the military began to reduce its resources in Afghanistan. Yet the heavy reliance on using the Guard and Reserve there continued.

Operation Iraqi Freedom

On March 19, 2003, the United States and coalition forces launched the invasion of Iraq in order to remove Saddam Hussein's regime from power. Coalition air forces battered Baghdad from the air after which conventional American and coalition ground forces began rolling into Iraq. As the following month began, Army Rangers embarked on a mission to protect the Haditha Dam from being destroyed by Iraqi forces. The Rangers expected the operation to last approximately 24 hours. Instead it took them more than 12 days.

Sitting on the Euphrates River about 100 miles northwest of Baghdad, the

multilevel dam complex was a critical source of water for irrigation and electrical power in western Iraq. If the Iraqis succeeded in blowing up the dam, the releasing waters would flood the down-river areas, causing a humanitarian and environmental disaster and a strategic delay en route to Baghdad. Seizing the dam complex would protect the water supply and retain the ability to provide electricity, both of which were critical resources during the approaching summer months of 2003.

The Rangers expected the dam to be well defended. In preparation for the assault on the dam, fighters assigned to the 410th Air Expeditionary Wing (AEW) conducted preparatory air strikes against Iraqi forces in the dam's vicinity. Air support for Special Forces in the battle came from various coalition aircraft including U.S. Army Special Operations Aviation units. However, that battle became one of the more unique operations for the AEW, and in particular, Air Guard pilots. The 410th

was responsible for providing combat search and rescue capability for western and central Iraq. During the month-long air campaign over the western Iraqi desert, the A-10 and F-16 Air Guard pilots assigned to the AEW were involved in countless missions supporting Special Forces teams in need of close air support. The highly experienced Air Guard pilots assigned to the AEW, especially the A-10 pilots, helped insure the successful employment of close air support for friendly forces fighting to retain the Haditha Dam.

Special Operations AH-6s and F-16s from the 410th provided air cover as the Rangers took their convoy to Haditha. During the night, with support from the 410th, the Rangers seized the dam, a power station, and a transformer yard while facing light to moderate enemy resistance. Several Iraqis were killed and wounded; others, including 25 civilian workers, were taken prisoner.

As daylight broke over the dam, the



Munitions personnel from the 160th Fighter Squadron, 187th Fighter Wing, Alabama Air National Guard, assigned to the 410th Air Expeditionary Wing at a forward deployed location work on guided munitions on the pylon of one of their F-16C Fighting Falcons. The Falcon has an AIM-120A Advanced Medium Air-to-Air Missile fixed to the wing tip. The 410th Air Expeditionary Wing prepares the aircraft for take off for sorties on A-Day, the commencement of the air war for Operation Iraqi Freedom, March 19, 2003. (Photographer: SSgt Bennie J. Davis III, USAF. Air Force Photo.)



The 114th Fighter Wing, South Dakota Air National Guard, Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (Prime BEEF), at Tallil Air Base, Iraq. The photo was taken near Tallil Air Base, in the ruins of Ur, considered one of the oldest cities in the world, 2003. (Air National Guard Photo.)

Rangers began taking increasing enemy fire from the south as well as coordinated attacks at both ends of the dam. Although the Rangers repelled the initial assault, Iraqi counterattacks continued with heavy mortar and artillery shells that rained down on the Rangers. Fortunately, the Rangers had ample air support from the 410th,

Many of the Air Guard pilots flying close air support were not only highly experienced pilots, but they possessed other critical skills as well. Most two-ship A-10 flights consisted of a pilot who had qualified as a Forward Air Controller (FAC) to guide other fighter aircraft to send their bombs to specific enemy targets.

efforts of an FAC-qualified pilot, a CSAR pilot, and observation posts manned by additional Rangers and Air Force enlisted terminal attack controllers (who cleared airborne weapons for release) ensured the Rangers on the dam would not be overrun. That operation reflected the typical attitude held by Air Guard aviators, especially A-

Rangers shared their experiences with the pilots basically explaining, “if it were not for you guys, I would not be here.”

which attacked several mortar positions. Even without the protection of darkness, the Air Guard A-10s attacked numerous enemy positions. At nightfall the Iraqis resumed their attacks against the Rangers, but once again close air supported the U.S. forces. A single bomb obliterated the attackers and shattered every window in the dam complex. Nevertheless, the siege continued for ten more days.

After delivering their own firepower, the flight leader and his wingman would remain over the battlefield to help the other aircraft to accurately employ their munitions. The wingman was a qualified combat search and rescue (CSAR) pilot who would coordinate with other rescue assets if needed.

The Rangers on the dam were greatly outnumbered. Nevertheless, the combined

10 pilots, who believed that when ground troops needed help, the pilots would remain as long as possible to “lay it on the line more and expose themselves more over the target area.” Even when the Rangers were not taking enemy fire, the A-10s provided cover so the Rangers could catch a few hours of sleep. The 410th fighters also supplied air cover during medical evacuation missions for killed and wounded Rangers.

During the twelfth day of the siege, the outnumbered Rangers continued to face repeated attacks by the enemy force. The Air Guard A-10 and F-16 pilots realized early in the battle that the close air support they provided was the vital element that kept the Iraqi forces at bay, a matter of life and death for the Rangers. In the end the coalition forces prevailed. Military experts believed that without the air support, especially the A-10s, the Rangers would not have won the battle. Not only did the coalition forces secure the Haditha Dam complex, but they seriously reduced the fighting effectiveness of the Iraqi Armored Task Force in the Haditha area. Weeks later, back at Fort Benning, Georgia, some of the Air Guard pilots had the opportunity to meet the Rangers they looked after. The meeting became emotional at times because Rangers shared their experiences with the pilots basically explaining, “if it were not for you guys, I would not be here.”

The Air Guard experience at Haditha Dam dramatically illustrated its essential role in Operation Iraqi Freedom air support. In addition to its air power the ANG provided a robust force of over 3,530 personnel for the expeditionary combat support functions and many Air Guard senior officers held command positions during the war. Air National Guard intelligence personnel deployed overseas and supported the war effort in signals intelligence by flying Senior Scout missions and augmented River Joint crews to “monitor the electronic activity of adversaries.” Although their pilots sat at controls in the United States, Air Guardsmen also “flew” Global Hawk and Predator unmanned aerial vehicle intelligence missions in Southwest Asia. The Air Guard also deployed air traffic control personnel, maintainers, and airspace managers. Over 27 percent of the total Air Force civil engineer force in Iraq came from the ANG; other Air Guard engineers supported Iraqi Freedom while

operating in several other countries.

Besides providing personnel ANG contributed aircraft and equipment to the war effort while continuing its efforts in Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan and exercising a primary role in Operation Noble Eagle in the United

60 percent of the targets destroyed.

As in Afghanistan, the Air Guard contributed significant transportation capability to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Thirteen of ANG’s 25 airlift units participated, including 72 of 124 Air Force C-130s. Among their missions, Air



A South Carolina Air National Guard F-16C Fighting Falcon aircraft from the 157th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, is recovered following a nighttime mission at a forward deployed location during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The aircraft is armed with AIM-120B Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles, AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, and AGM-88 High-Speed Antiradiation Missiles, March 23, 2003. (Photographer: SMSgt Edward E. Snyder. Air Force Photo.)

States. For example, the ANG deployed 40 percent of the mobile radars, mobile navigation aids, and 40 percent of the mobile control towers in Iraq. During the opening phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, 48 of the 60 A-10s engaged in the Iraq war belonged to the Air Guard. Five Air Guard A-10 units and one active duty A-10 unit flew in this operation that year. Although the A-10 aircraft represented only eight percent of the total Air Force fighters used in that war, they flew 44 percent of the fighter sorties, and were responsible for

Guard C-130 crews airlifted elements of the 82nd Airborne Division and the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force. Those crews also flew one of the first day/night airlift missions into an Iraq air base and delivered the first humanitarian supplies into Baghdad International Airport. In Iraqi Freedom’s first six months, Air Guard C-130 crews airlifted 22,000 tons of cargo, 47,000 passengers, and flew 8,600 sorties in 21,000 hours.

Operation Iraqi Freedom’s intelligence collection efforts were enhanced by the



Commando Solo EC-130E from the 193rd Special Operations Wing, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, sits on the ramp at undisclosed location during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom in late 2005. (Official Photo by: Capt David Earhart, 193rd Special Operations Wing, Air National Guard Photo.)

initial combat employment of the Air Force's first (and as of 2007 only) blended wing: the newly formed 116th Air Control Wing, composed of ANG and active duty Air Force personnel based in Warner-Robins, Georgia. The wing deployed nine of its 11 assigned JSTARS

reach its target populations. According to Rick Hofmann, president of the U.S. Psychological Operations Veterans Association, with leaflet drops and radio propaganda broadcasts as the chief weapons, its main purposes included persuading the enemy to surrender and convincing local

Air National Guard tankers provided one-third of the Air Force refueling aircraft deployed for Iraqi Freedom...

aircraft to the Iraqi Freedom theater as well as over 600 unit personnel including one-tenth of the aircrews. Air Guardsmen composed about one-fourth of the Wing's deployed personnel.

Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) used more old-fashioned methods to

civilians that the attackers were not the real enemy. "The objective is always to shorten the conflict by demoralizing the enemy and to keep civilians out of harm's way." For example, the 193rd Special Operations Wing of the Pennsylvania ANG deployed its Commando Solo aircraft for a variety

of PSYOPS support to coalition agencies in Iraq. Flying from March to June 2003, its missions apparently fulfilled their goals. According to an Iraqi prisoner of war and former mid-level intelligence officer, the population in southern Iraq considered the coalition radio broadcasts more truthful than state-owned media. The leaflets also had a significant impact on the morale of Iraqi military and prompted considerations to surrender. The Iraqis concluded that U.S. planes could as easily target them with bombs as leaflets if their intent was lethal.

As essential to the war effort as were C-130s, A-10s, and piloted reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft, they could not have completed their missions efficiently without aerial refueling. During the war in Iraq, the Air Force deployed 200 tanker aircraft based at 15 locations. Air National Guard tankers provided one-third of the Air Force refueling aircraft deployed for Iraqi Freedom, and an additional 35 ANG tanker aircraft conducted air bridge operations. Meanwhile, in the United States, the Air Guard had 21 remaining tanker aircraft tasked to support Operation Noble Eagle (ONE), 70 percent of the tanker alerts and aerial refueling missions for ONE. The most widely used resource in the ANG, however, stayed on the ground: air traffic controllers. With Operation Iraqi Freedom, the ANG's Air Traffic Control Squadrons now supported three major operations including Operation Noble Eagle and Operation Enduring Freedom.

While the Air Guard participated in Iraqi Freedom in its traditional roles such as airlift, air refueling, airborne reconnaissance, and psychological operations, it also engaged in new roles that involved historically significant combat capabilities, especially systems that allowed precision attacks that would not only destroy the intended target but reduce or eliminate collateral damage. Perhaps the most important was the day, night, and all-weather LITENING II targeting pod fitted to ANG fighter aircraft.



An F-16C Block 30, 107th Fighter Squadron, 127th Wing, Michigan ANG, carrying LITENING II pods in Kirkuk, Iraq. The 107th was the first F-16 unit in the Total Air Force to be based in Iraq. (Photographer: MSgt Glenn Wilkiwitz, Air National Guard. Air National Guard Photo.)

LITENING II targeting pods allowed a precise fix of the location of enemy vehicles. The Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard developed that pod in conjunction with the Air Force and defense contractors because the active force could not provide the equipment needed by the Air Reserve Components to equip their fighter units for precision attacks under any conditions.

In 2004 the 107th Fighter Squadron, 127th Wing, Michigan ANG, became the first unit to use the Theater Air Reconnaissance System pod in combat in conjunction with a second F-16C carrying a LITENING targeting pod. Both also carried precision guided munitions. While in Iraq the 107th flew combat missions over some of the fiercest battles waged in the Fallujah and Najaf areas, known for their anti-American activities. With the escalation of the Iraqi insurgency that year, characterized by roadside detonations of improvised explosive devises, the use of

targeting pods along with manned and unmanned aerial surveillance also proved their utility to the safety of coalition troops on the ground.

Although President George W. Bush famously proclaimed an end to major hostilities in Operation Iraqi Freedom on May 1, 2003, and Saddam Hussein was captured on December 13 of that year and executed December 30, 2006, the Iraqi conflict continued through 2007 and the Air National Guard continued its involvement. Overall, ANG's contribution to the "global war on terrorism" was unlike any previous combat operation in its history. During Fiscal Year 2006, Air National Guard crews flew more than 50 percent of the fighter, tanker, and airlift sorties for Operation Noble Eagle; provided almost one-third of the fighter sorties in Operation Enduring Freedom; and provided over one-third of the fighter and tanker sorties for Operation Iraqi

Freedom. Air National Guard crews also supported 75 percent of the tanker sorties and over 60 percent of the airlift sorties to other theaters. In addition, Air National Guard expeditionary combat support units participated in operations and exercises around the world. More than two-thirds of the Air National Guard personnel have engaged in worldwide operations since September 11, 2001. The Air Guard also deployed approximately one-third of the force dedicated to support the war in Iraq. By 2004 nearly 40 percent of the total Air Force aircraft deployed for overseas operations were assigned to the Air National Guard. That illustrated the continued reliance on Air Guard aircraft in the total Air Force aircraft deployments since the end of the Cold War. With no end in sight to the "global war on terrorism," the long term impact of such heavy demands on the ANG's citizen airmen was impossible to gauge. ✍



SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

While Guardsmen pursued the “global war on terrorism” overseas, at home, Air National Guard (ANG) citizen airmen engaged in real world missions supporting civil authorities. They fought forest fires, fed cattle during blizzards, conducted hurricane and flood relief operations, assisted the Customs and Border Patrol in the American southwest, and even protected Santa Claus as he made his rounds on Christmas Eve! Whether only a few airmen might participate in these operations, the significance of their

contributions lay not in sheer numbers of personnel, but rather the specialized technical capabilities they provided.

Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams

The Department of Defense first authorized the formation of Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams (WMD-CSTs or CSTs) in the 1990s to assist civilian first responders with technical advice, communications, and other support during potential major disasters within the United States. Twenty-two ANG and Army National Guard specialists composed each WMD-CST. On September 11, 2001, Scotia, New York's 2nd Civil Support Team became the first of those teams to deploy in a real crisis. After the tragedy that day, Congress wanted each state and territory to have one of those units with California meriting two teams making the final total 55. As of August 2007 52 of those teams had been certified.

Exemplifying the kind of work handled by Civil Support Teams, on February 28, 2007, a barge containing 220,000 gallons of an irritating chemical hit a lock on the Ohio River between Illinois and Kentucky sending approximately 10,000 gallons into the water. The spill gave off a foul smell and "caused quite a scare," observed the Heartland News. The chemical could "cause dizziness and irritate the eyes, nose, and throat" as well as "be damaging to animals directly exposed to it." Released as a liquid, it evaporated into a gas that threatened residents of Metropolis, Illinois. The spill caused that portion of the Ohio River to close. Kentucky's 41 CST, including four specially trained Air Guardsmen, responded immediately and began to monitor the air quality. Working in conjunction with the U.S. Coast Guard,



National Guard Airmen have been assisting state civil authorities in floods since at least the great Mississippi flood of 1927. Here members of the Indiana Air National Guard participate in an emergency operation after recent flooding in Fort Wayne, Indiana, March 1, 1982. (Photographer: TSgt David Craft, Air Force Photo.) LEFT: C-130E Hercules cargo aircraft from the 146th Airlift Wing, California, rigged with a Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) makes a Phoschek fire retardant drop on the Simi Fire in Southern California, October 28, 2003. (Camera Operator: Sgt Alex Koenig, USAF, Air Force Photo.)

the team called in the 5th Civil Support Team of Illinois to monitor its side of the river and the 45th Civil Support Team of Tennessee joined it to monitor Kentucky. Although the Coast Guard contained the spill, the CSTs continued their monitoring another two days until the chemicals were transferred to another barge.

Natural Disasters

Members of Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Teams were not the only Air Guardsmen to respond to disasters. Traditionally, governors called out National Guard units when faced with natural but localized disasters such as blizzards, earthquakes, floods, and forest fires. The president could also federalize them in major disasters that threatened to overwhelm the resources of individual states or communities. According to the National Guard Bureau, "The indigenous skills and capabilities National Guardsmen used

to respond to natural disasters are the same skills and capabilities that enable us to successfully respond to potential terrorist threats."

Airborne wildfire fighting could be extremely dangerous. While Air Force C-130s normally conducted low-level flight training at 300 feet above ground level, fire fighting missions flew at 120 to 150 feet in heat and smoke often in remote, mountainous areas. Major Iver Osborn, an instructor pilot with the 153rd Airlift Wing, Wyoming Air Guard, stressed that he found airborne firefighting his most challenging mission. Making sure the fire retardant found its target, "cut to the heart of true piloting skills..." The Air Guard found that fire fighting helped its aircrews hone their wartime low-level airdrop, formation-flying skills. In addition to the 153rd, California ANG's 146th Tactical Airlift Wing and North Carolina ANG's 145th Airlift Wing flew firefighting missions.

The Air National Guard's main tool for fighting fires was the Modular



Following a devastating blizzard in 1949, Colorado Air Guard C-47s dropped hay to stranded and starving livestock throughout the Rocky Mountain region. Altogether the Colorado Air Guardsmen flew 17 such missions dropping tons of hay that saved thousands of cattle and wildlife. Colorado Air Guard F-51s and A-26s also flew 10 reconnaissance missions during that emergency, January 29, 1949. (Air National Guard Photo.)

Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS), which underwent several updates since its first use in September 1971 by the 146th. Housed in C-130s, a MAFFS could disperse up to 27,000 pounds—almost 3,000 gallons—of commercial fire retardants or an equivalent amount of water. Newer aircraft like the C-130J held the MAFFS II, which carried even more fire retardant, could disperse it more rapidly over a wider area, and was easier to recharge after a mission than its predecessor. The growing number of significant forest fires in the 21st century challenged U.S. firefighting resources. Looking back on 2006, Colonel Harold Reed, 153rd Airlift Wing commander, explained that Wyoming Air Guard members used to get called out for wildfires about once every three years for one or two weeks at a time. Now they were being called out each year for about a month at a time. “It keeps us

very, very busy,” he said, adding that forest fires have become more severe and tougher to fight.

Blizzards also created the need for National Guard support. As with the Civil Support Teams, often both Army Guard and Air Guard units assisted with health and welfare matters, conducted debris removal and power generation, and provided supply and transportation support in connection with snowstorms. For example, a Christmas-time 2006 blizzard at the airport hub of Denver International Airport closed that facility down for two days. Army and Air Guardsmen took food and water to thousands of travelers trapped there. In the same storm, western Kansas received between 15 and 36 inches of snow with drifts as high as 13 feet. The Air National Guard not only assisted people, but also dropped bales of hay to feed stranded cattle.

Relief operations such as those that occurred after a 6.7 earthquake on the Big Island of Hawaii in October 2006 and after floods in Washington State the following month, also typified ANG disaster and relief operations. In Washington Army and Air Guardsmen provided transportation for sandbagging, resupply, evacuation, high wheel vehicle operations, and traffic control points. Guardsmen in Hawaii also assisted with aerial surveillance and transportation.

On August 29, 2005, the largest natural disaster the Air Guard faced in its 60 year history began when Hurricane Katrina hit the United States Gulf Coast. The most severe damage came from a 30-plus-foot storm surge along the Mississippi coast and the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain in Louisiana and breaks in the levies along a canal in New Orleans. Several weeks later Hurricane

Rita devastated portions of western Louisiana and eastern Texas, and then the less severe Hurricane Wilma damaged Florida. With much of the Guard's personnel and equipment overseas in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, those hurricanes tested the

ability of ANG to respond in wartime to a major disaster within the United States.

Senior Master Sergeant Doug Gilbert arrived on the Gulf Coast August 29, 2005, within hours of the storm's arrival. From Florida's 202nd RED HORSE Squadron, 125th Fighter Wing, Sergeant

Gilbert was one of the first to enter the area. Seventy-three engineers from his unit worked in hard-hit Hancock County, Mississippi. First, his civil engineering unit established a base camp for infantrymen of the 3rd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, from the Florida Army National Guard. In addition, his unit began repairs in Hancock County communities working nearly around-the-clock on multiple construction projects to restore power, clean and repair schools, and refurbish electrical supplies. "Most of the schools had four to eight feet of water in them." While conducting a survey of the area, the school superintendent spotted Gilbert and began asking him questions. According to an American Forces Press Service interview, Gilbert "told her that the 202nd could help rebuild the schools and the community, [and she] cried and hugged him." By mid-September, the schools could be occupied. As a Florida unit, the 202nd had worked many other hurricanes. However, Katrina's devastation surpassed anything in their previous experience.

Hurricane Katrina made its first U.S. landfall in Florida on August 25, 2005. At that time, the Air National Guard had mobilized 840 personnel in that state, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas. Although the Air National Guard had a domestic mission to support local authorities in rescue and relief operations following a natural disaster, its utilization for such missions had been limited primarily to a select group of career fields such as civil engineers like Sergeant Gilbert, medical personnel, and services. In response to Hurricane Katrina, ANG units in all 54 states and territories responded to the recovery efforts in the Gulf States. The ANG flew 73 percent of the airlift for the relief operations including its brand new C-130J and C-17 aircraft. In addition, ANG Combat Search and



Mississippi Air National Guard (MSANG) personnel assist these displaced civilians as they disembark from MSANG C-17A Globemaster III cargo aircraft. These people were evacuated from Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, due to flooding from Hurricane Katrina and flown to Kelly City Base, Texas, August 30, 2005. (Photographer: SRA Heather Norris, Air Force Photo.)



Mississippi Air National Guard Staff Sergeant Joseph L. Smith, with the 172nd Civil Engineering Squadron headquartered in Jackson, is a firefighter in his civilian life as well as one in the Guard. He is clearing debris in Gulfport, Mississippi, during the Hurricane Katrina relief effort, September 9, 2005. (Photographer: 2Lt Murray B. Shugars, Mississippi Army National Guard. National Guard Photo.)

Rescue pararescuemen and Combat Controllers saved over 1,300 victims.

To support rescue and relief operations in New Orleans, the Air National Guard used the Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base, in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, on the Mississippi River's West Bank. Within five hours of its orders, the 136th Airlift Wing, Texas ANG, deployed 41 Guardsmen to Belle Chasse. Less than

EMEDS personnel could perform surgery, dental services, laboratory services, pharmacy services, and inpatient care. Although EMEDS usually had a specific bed limit such as 25 beds, medical personnel could still provide outpatient care for many victims.

Because of the large amount of equipment an EMEDS team used, airlifting the 22 pallets bound for the

Gulf Region took ANG C-130 units two days. Nevertheless, ANG EMEDS personnel arrived as early as August 29, 2005. This group came from the 190th Air Refueling Wing, Kansas ANG, and the Combat Readiness Training Center in Alpena, Michigan, where EMEDS training was conducted. They set up operations in Gulfport, Mississippi, and at Louis Armstrong Airport in suburban

Within five hours of its orders, the 136th Airlift Wing, Texas ANG, deployed 41 Guardsmen to Belle Chasse.

24 hours later, a C-130H landed at the air base with members of Louisiana's 159th Fighter Wing. Soon more aircraft arrived, delivering troops and supplies for New Orleans; offloaded pallets were stacked 10 deep on the aircraft parking ramp. Instead of heading into the flooded city, the 136th team remained at Belle Chasse and, within 36 hours of arriving, it established a fully functioning Air Terminal Operations Center and was keeping pace with the demanding mission schedule. That Aerial Port team, augmented by U.S. Navy cargo handlers and members of the 133rd Aerial Port Squadron, 133rd Airlift Wing, Minnesota, handled over 124 missions with 1.5 million pounds of cargo and 974 passengers in one day. As one of its most crucial tasks, the Texas squadron downloaded the German pump system used to drain the city of New Orleans because its own pumps were inundated. It also uploaded two KC-135s with 140 kennels filled with rescued dogs bound for adoption in Arizona.

Katrina also provided the first real-time opportunity for the Air National Guard's Expeditionary Medical Support (EMEDS) teams to deploy in response to a domestic natural disaster. EMEDS was a collection of small, modular medical units that replaced larger theater hospitals. The



U.S. Air Force and civilian medical personnel offload patients from a C-130H Hercules aircraft from the 130th Airlift Wing, West Virginia, Air National Guard, shortly after arriving at Houston, Texas. Department of Defense units were mobilizing as part of Joint Task Force Katrina to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster-relief efforts in the Coast areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina. (Air Force Photo.)

New Orleans. In addition, the ANG also established a temporary facility in Hancock County, Mississippi, as a stop-gap until the severely damaged Hancock Medical Center, the county's only medical facility, was back in operation. As a result, ANG EMEDS provided an essential service. These EMEDS consisted of medical personnel from Mississippi, Alabama, Kansas, and Delaware Air National Guard units. During the Katrina emergency EMEDS exemplified a total force operation where active duty, Air Guard, and Air Force Reserve personnel worked with Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) medical teams to care for and transport thousands of Katrina victims. The EMEDS rapid deployment capability enabled over 30,000 people to be processed through the New Orleans airport in five days.

On September 22, 2005, less than one month after Sergeant Gilbert and his 136th Aerial Port Squadron members deployed to Mississippi, they were called back to Texas. Hurricane Rita was expected to hit the Houston area where many Katrina evacuees had settled. In the end Rita missed the large metropolitan area, but on September 24, the hurricane devastated Louisiana's Vermilion Parish and sections of east Texas. The Air Guard's base at Ellington Field, near Houston, reopened the next day and the 136th Airlift Wing, based in Fort Worth, used it as an aerial logistics site to fly in water, meals-ready-to-eat, and other supplies to first responders and Guardsmen supporting rescue and recovery efforts.

For his hurricane work, Master Sergeant Lynn Bailey, of the 147th Fighter Wing, Texas, "a reluctant hero," became one of the few Air National Guardsmen to receive an Army Guard medal. On September 26, 2005, Major General Charles Rodriguez, the Adjutant



A Puerto Rico Air National Guard C-130 Hercules cargo aircraft flew patients evacuated from Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, because of Hurricane Katrina. Here personnel from the Puerto Rico Air National Guard prepare to load a stretcher-borne patient into a waiting ambulance to be taken to Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for further medical treatment, August 30, 2005. (Photographer: SRA Heather Norris, USAF. Air Force Photo.)

General of Texas awarded it to Sergeant Bailey for potentially saving the lives of hundreds of "impaired and elderly" nursing home residents from Beaumont, Texas. Sergeant Bailey served as a fuels superintendent for the 147th. In that

capacity, he responded to "a desperate request" from the Texas Department of Transportation to deliver fuel for 30 buses stranded at the Sam Houston Race Park. The buses required the fuel to assist with evacuation in anticipation

of Hurricane Rita. “It brought back memories of Iraq when we were desperately trying to get fuel from Baghdad to Kirkuk during the initial stages of the war,” recalled Sergeant Bailey. “Our unit was the first one able to deliver fuel to Baghdad.”

Next the 147th had to rescue the buses in Beaumont designated to evacuate older and infirm residents of the area. The Army National Guard there had enough gas, but it lacked the proper nozzle to put the fuel into the buses. Sergeant Bailey did not have the proper nozzle either. Instead, with the help of Staff Sergeant Vic Taylor, a refueling mechanic, he improvised one using old refueling parts from his shop. “I was awake for 26 hours, but I was running on adrenaline,” Sergeant Bailey explained. Army Guardsmen conducted the actual rescue operation. But they could not have done it without the ingenuity of Sergeant Bailey’s team.

If Hurricanes Katrina and Rita were not enough of a challenge for a National Guard already stretched thin by Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, one month after Rita, Hurricane Wilma slammed into Florida. While not as destructive as its two predecessors, it still affected a substantial number of Floridians. The 172nd Airlift Wing from Jackson Air National Guard Base, Mississippi, for example, delivered 140,000 pounds of food, water, and juice to Homestead Air Force Base, Florida, in its C-17 Globemaster.

The Air National Guard not only performed rescue and relief work in the United States, but also overseas. For example, in 1998, a typhoon destroyed homes and buildings on Guam. The ANG helped rebuild them. Then in 2005, after a major earthquake affected a mountainous, hard-to-reach area of Pakistan, the 105th Airlift Wing, New York, flew humanitarian missions

using its huge C-5 Galaxies to transport helicopters and rescue supplies. Air Guardsmen and their aircraft also fought major fires abroad as in 1997 when the Wyoming Air National Guard’s 153rd Airlift Wing assisted the Indonesian government in fighting massive fires in that nation’s tropical rain forests.

Operation Jump Start

Illegal immigration over the border with Mexico had plagued the United States for generations. Over the years various programs had been developed to allow needed farm workers to come in legally and temporarily while the path to a green card (permanent residency) and citizenship had become more difficult. Border communities and increasingly, areas farther north, complained of welfare and subsidized medical costs, crowded schools, and drugs and high crime associated with

undocumented aliens. Because many of those illegals willingly worked long hours at low wages, and even became home and business owners paying taxes and contributing to the community, they received significant support among certain segments of the population and among certain businesses. As a result of that dichotomy, the federal government was unable to develop a satisfactory policy of dealing with illegal immigration while the estimated number of those undocumented aliens by 2006 had risen to an estimated 12 million. After September 11, 2001, the fear that terrorists also used the porous Mexican border tipped the balance in favor of clamping down on illegals. Primary responsibility for that mission belonged to the Border Patrol of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (Department of Justice), which after 2003 became Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) in



Air National Guard Captain Jose R. D. Cabrera, a nurse from the 146th Medical Squadron, California Air National Guard, gets a blood pressure reading of a local villager in the town of Punta Gorda, Belize, during a 15-day medical humanitarian operation called Medrete 03. During the operation over 3,600 patients were treated and help was delivered to people affected by Hurricane Iris, February 13, 2002. (Photographer: MSgt Rod Thornburg, USA. Air Force Photo.)



Air National Guard airmen of the 188th Fighter Wing, Arkansas Air National Guard, install a fence along the U.S.-Mexico border east of San Luis, Arizona. The Guardsmen were working in partnership with the U.S. Border Patrol as part of Operation Jump Start, October 3, 2006. (Photographer: SSgt Dan Heaton, USAF. Air Force Photo.)

the Department of Homeland Security. Some National Guard units helped the CBP by building a fence along a portion of the border and assisting in the effort to staunch the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.

In response to growing criticism of the federal government's efforts at preventing the influx of undocumented aliens, President George W. Bush promised on May 15, 2006, to bolster the Border Patrol. Because recruitment and training would take time, the president suggested that for at least one year, up to 6,000 National Guardsmen at any one time could be deployed to assist the CBP on the Southwest border.

Operation Jump Start, the name given to that National Guard mission, involved the borders of Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Texas. Their governors agreed to accept National Guard units from other

states deployed "to perform duties in support of this border enforcement effort." Governors could decline participation if it conflicted with their Guard's ability to respond to state emergencies. To minimize disruption the plan envisioned using the normal two-week training periods to rotate traditional (part-time) Guardsmen in and out of the border. The memorandum of understanding signed between the Department of Defense and the governors of the four border states explicitly removed the National Guard from law enforcement duties.

The Air National Guard played a significant role in Jump Start. As in other operations, its medical personnel used their skills for operating in hostile environments. According to Captain Anita Fouch, a nurse practitioner with West Virginia Air Guard's 130th Airlift

Wing, "Our mission is to deliver general medical care in an innovative manner in an isolated area." Jump Start troops risked "dehydration, sunburn, insect bites and stings, snake bites, and twisted ankles." To respond to those and other medical needs, seven West Virginia Air Guard members from the 167th Medical Group, 167th Airlift Squadron, 167th Airlift Wing, renovated an abandoned clinic in Playas, New Mexico, a 1,840-acre town purchased by the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. The team commanded by Flight Surgeon Colonel David Porter deployed within four days of receiving their orders in July 2006. Colonel Porter praised Operation Jump Start as a good training opportunity: "There's nothing like hands-on to really learn the job." The need for a medical staff also underscored the



LC-130Hs equipped with landing skis, operated by the 109th Airlift Squadron, New York Air National Guard, parked on the ice pack at McMurdo Station at Ross Island in Antarctica during Operation Deep Freeze 2001. The unit operates six LC-130s between Christchurch, New Zealand, and a number of U.S. National Science Foundation stations located on the Antarctic ice pack, November 5, 2001. (Photographer: MSgt Joe Cupido. Air Force Photo.)

dangers the Guardsmen faced near the border. “You see ‘coyotes’ [smugglers] with truckloads of people just speeding through,” explained National Guard Bureau Historian William Boehm, who visited the border operations in September 2006. “It’s a nasty place.”

The ANG performed other functions as well. For example, 17 Washington Air National Guard members with the 252nd Combat Communications Group also deployed to Arizona to set up a radio communications network. Even traditional Guard duties such as road building by ANG civil engineers could take a surprising turn in the southwestern desert. For two weeks 25 Nevada Air Guardsmen from the 152nd Civil Engineering Squadron took part in an unusual caravan as they graded rough roads for the Border Patrol to use. Their work took them to the

Tohono O’Odham Indian Reservation, approximately one mile from the U.S.-Mexico border. According to Master Sergeant David Tilley, the unit’s noncommissioned officer in charge and a supervisor in the broadband department for Churchill County Communications, the caravan consisted of his team, a Border Patrol agent who “kept watch” on their work, and “a car loaded with two archaeologists and a monitor from the Tohono O’Odham reservation.” The archaeologists and Indian got involved if the Guard disturbed artifacts. The tribe approved the construction of vehicle barriers to slow down the illegal aliens from crossing into the United States.

Including its Operation Jump Start support personnel deployed some distance from the border, by August 1, 2006, the National Guard met its benchmark of over 6,000 participating

Guardsmen. Two days later, President Bush visited the Texas border where he observed Guardsmen “working long hours ... to keep this border secure We saw choppers of all kinds of new equipment on it—airplanes that can interdict people flying in drugs, fast boats to stop the people trying to bring drugs or people up and down the coast of Texas.” He also noted that for each Guardsman working construction, logistics, or surveillance, “it means there’s one more Border Patrol agent out on the front line. So we’re going to use this Guard until we get 6,000 more people trained.”

Other Operations

The Air National Guard also participated in noncombat support missions that sometimes took it beyond the U.S. boundaries. For example, in Operation

Winter Freeze, from November 2004 through January 2005, nearly 250 Army and Air Guardsmen provided assistance to the Customs and Border Patrol along 295 miles of the United States-Canadian border. That operation included military personnel from U.S. Northern Command's Joint Task Force North who helped the Border Patrol to "keep potential terrorists out of the country and to break up smuggling rings that try to get them in." In order "to detect, deter, and monitor suspicious actions ... Air Guard crews flew twin-engine, C-26 airplanes out of Syracuse, N.Y."

Operation Winter Freeze, first conducted in 2004, represented a new direction for the Air National Guard. By including other military services besides the Air Force, it truly implemented the total force concept. Almost as significant,

state police, the Secret Service, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for those missions. Congress, responding to the success of those arrangements, passed legislation in October 2004 making it easier for the secretary of defense to use National Guardsmen who were still under the command of their state governors to conduct homeland security operations.

On the other side of the world Air National Guard Lieutenant Colonel Gary James of Schenectady, New York's 109th Airlift Wing, and his crew of five, piloted one of the two final LC-130 cargo planes to close the 2006 Operation Deep Freeze located at McMurdo Station near the South Pole. The mission ended because the temperature dropped to almost minus 50 degrees Fahrenheit in three days. Since 1988 the squadron had provided the air supply bridge for

these airplanes with wheels landed on an ice runway near the station. However, as it got colder, the ski-equipped LC-130s landed on a snow-covered skiway on the Ross Ice Shelf a few miles from the station. In 2006 the operation included 466 flights—a record—and it also boasted the most flights over the South Pole, 337. In the spring and summer, the 109th headed toward the North Pole where it supported the National Science Foundation and several other nations in Greenland and above the Arctic Circle.

This sampling of how the Air National Guard support to civil authorities would be incomplete without mentioning an additional, important duty regarding the North Pole. Every year the North American Aerospace Defense Command along with its Canadian counterpart tracked Santa Claus as he flew through the northeast air space. Just in case Rudolph's nose failed or the sleigh developed a problem, the Air National Guard had jet fighter aircraft ready to fly to Santa's aid.

The Christmas Eve tracking of Santa receives national attention. However, for much of an Air National Guard unit's support for civil authorities, only the local media emphasize its accomplishments. Most Air National Guardsmen live and hold civilian jobs within their home communities in contrast to active duty airmen who live on or near air bases and move every few years. When emergencies like floods, tornados, or blizzards occur, these Guardsmen often join their local first responders. The Air National Guard's role in natural and man-made disasters like forest fires could be as hazardous as if they were in combat. Similarly, their participation in major noncombat missions like Operation Deep Freeze can also pose extreme dangers. Regardless of the risks involved, the role of the Air National Guard in supporting civil authorities, state and federal, remains a significant one. ❧

Operation Winter Freeze, first conducted in 2004, represented a new direction for the Air National Guard.

an arrangement between the president and the governors permitted a Guard leader to command airmen under both state and federal jurisdiction. The G-8 Economic Summit in Georgia, the Democratic and Republican national political party conventions in Boston and New York City respectively, also operated using joint task forces. For the first time in the nation's history, "... a single officer stood on top of both state and federal chains of command for a single operation." The Guard's joint force state headquarters staffs were integrated with their counterparts at USNORTHCOM,

the National Science Foundation's study of Antarctica. Lieutenant Colonel Walt Clark, Pacific Air Forces Director of Operations and Plans for Joint Task Force Support Forces Antarctica Operation Deep Freeze, noted that the military considered that operation, "its most difficult peacetime mission because of the extreme austerity of the environment and the remoteness of Antarctica ... the temperatures are so severe that at times aircraft cannot fly because the fuel gels and the steel shrinks, causing fuel leakages." Supplies and people were flown by C-130s to McMurdo where, in summer,

The Predator is a high-altitude aerial reconnaissance plane that is used for surveillance. Here it serves as eyes in the sky for ground forces in Operation Iraqi Freedom. (Photographer: Staff Sgt Jeremy T. Lock, Air Force Photo.)



EPILOGUE

TOWARD THE FUTURE

When Lieutenant General Craig R. McKinley became the director of the Air National Guard in May 2006, he faced a “perfect storm” of challenges. They arose from efforts to continue Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s transformation policy, which remained largely unchanged after September 11, 2001. Involving the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), the Quadrennial Defense Review, and the President’s Budget Directive (PBD) 720, they threatened the Air National Guard’s (ANG) existing roles, missions, and personnel numbers. General McKinley, like his predecessor, Lieutenant General Daniel James III had to deal with these changes while preserving the Guard’s militia culture, community ties,



BELOW: Lieutenant General Daniel James III, Director, Air National Guard, talks with Lieutenant Colonel Carole Allan, Executive Officer, 180th Fighter Wing, and Lieutenant Colonel Maryanne Jankowski, Recruiter, 180th Fighter Wing, as he arrives at the Toledo Express Airport, located in Swanton, Ohio, August 19, 2003. (Photographer: SRA Elizabeth Slater, USAF Air Force Photo.)

state missions, and federal warfighting capabilities. Simultaneously, the resulting proposed personnel and aircraft reductions also impacted the ANG's other responsibilities. These included most of the expanded air sovereignty alert missions associated with Operation Noble Eagle, and the Guard's ongoing support to civil authorities and Air Force operations around the world.

The BRAC procedure was instituted as a way to depoliticize closing superfluous military bases and taking other cost-cutting steps that while streamlining the services could jeopardize local traditions and economic interests. In the BRAC procedure, a nine-member commission made recommendations to the president based on Department of Defense recommendations. If the president agreed with them, he sent the

list to Congress, which could only accept the recommendations in their entirety or completely reject them. Moreover,



the Air Force intended to acquire a new generation of highly capable and extremely expensive weapons systems including the F-22 and F-35 fighters and

the KC-X tanker. The Air Force applied BRAC recommendations aggressively in order to achieve savings that could help it acquire those aircraft. The Quarterly Defense Review (QDR) and the Program Budget Decision (PBD) based on QDR's conclusions took these plans into account. Because of the high cost and advanced capabilities of the new aircraft, there would not be enough new airframes purchased to replace existing ones on anything like a one for one basis. Therefore, like BRAC, the QDR and the PBD left the ANG with significant reductions in manpower and aircraft over the next five to six years. Various ANG units consequently needed to look to new mission areas that represented the future of the Air Force such as intelligence systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, space, and cyberspace.



Senior Airman Samantha Zimmerman, 192nd Fighter Wing, Virginia Air National Guard, launches her F-22A Raptor at Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, February 3, 2007. (Courtesy of the 192nd Fighter Wing, Photographer: MSgt Carlos Claudio.)

Otherwise, they faced elimination.

The creation of the Space and Information Superiority Division in the National Guard Bureau's Air Directorate demonstrated the Air National Guard's recognition that its future lay in those areas. In 2005 Colonel Kathleen Fick, that division's first director, explained that if ANG wanted to conduct operational missions and do more than play a supporting role, it had to embrace the new missions. Those missions took advantage of the Air National Guard's characteristics. For example, when active duty personnel engaged in intelligence, information operations, or space-related work joined the Guard, they required less training time. Guardsmen also provided continuity. Having the same people doing the same work year after year has always enhanced the Guard's value, and with missions involving

intelligence or information warfare, true proficiency may take years to establish. Traditional Guardsmen often spend their civilian hours performing similar work. As part time citizen airmen, they cost the government less than active duty Air Force personnel.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

According to Lieutenant Colonel Greg White, head of the Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) Division in the new directorate, "In today's warfare, we need more resources given to locating the enemy and fewer to destroy—the opposite of previous warfare."

Training took approximately 18 months according to a member of the 128th Air Command and Control Squadron, 116th Air Control Wing, but within another

18 months, the active duty person assumed a different role. The ANG member, on the other hand, might continue working intelligence missions for many years.

Not only were ANG ISR personnel involved in new missions, they sometimes served in new total force configurations. The 116th Air Control Wing based at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, was the only "blended wing" in the Air Force. Consisting of active duty Air Force as well as traditional and full time Guardsmen, the wing's command and control and its ISR people flew on an EC-8 with its Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, better known by its acronym JSTARS. The JSTARS radar, first deployed in Operation Desert Storm in 1991, tracked military activity on the ground and in helicopters.

The 170th Operations Support Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base,



Three Connecticut Air National Guard 103rd Fighter Wing A-10A Thunderbolt II attack aircraft fly in trail formation in preparation to refuel from a KC-135R Stratotanker aerial refueling aircraft as they fly to their new home base with the 188th Fighter Wing, Arkansas Air National Guard, at Fort Smith, Arkansas, as part of a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) reorganization, April 10, 2007. (Photographer: Senior MSgt Thomas Meneguini. Air Force Photo.)

Nebraska, associated as a unit with the 55th Wing also based at Offutt. As with the 116th in Georgia, 170th Air National Guardsmen worked together with active duty airmen; unlike the 116th, they had a separate administrative structure. The 55th Wing was home to Rivet Joint surveillance aircraft. Like JSTARS, Rivet Joint also operated in Desert Storm. It used automated and manual equipment for electronic and intelligence specialists to locate, record, and analyze

communications and electronic data. The 55th Wing was also associated with the Utah Air National Guard's 169th Intelligence Squadron that ran the Senior Scout signals intelligence missions in Afghanistan.

Aerial intelligence collection systems like JSTARS and Rivet Joint conducted data in collaboration with intelligence systems on Earth, the Distributed Common Ground Systems (DCGS), another component of ISR. While the

intelligence could be acquired anywhere in the world, a DCGS might lie thousands of miles away from the collection point. That made ground system work ideal for Air Guardsmen, because according to one commentator they could "perform ... key missions without being mobilized and deployed." The Air National Guard Distributed Ground Systems were located among other places in Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Nevada, and in associate units in California and Virginia. In August 2006 the Air Guard established its largest DCGS at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas. That facility became the new home for the 161st Intelligence Squadron.

Perhaps the most publicized of the Air Guard's intelligence capabilities related to its use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs)—also referred to as unmanned aerial systems, since they are basically plane-shaped computers and sensors. They came in a wide variety of sizes from tiny drones hardly bigger than a hobbyist's model airplane to full size aircraft capable of carrying heavy weapons as well as a full complement of surveillance equipment. For example weaponized Predators flown from consoles in the United States and abroad had been used for combat in the Middle East. According to Colonel Gail Wojtowicz, chief of the Air Force's Future Concepts and Transformation Division:

"Unmanned aircraft are a critical piece of ongoing Air Force transformation. Their persistence couples an unblinking eye with the ability to rapidly strike targets of opportunity, such as fleeting terrorists or insurgents. They also operate in dangerous chemical or biological environments ... and are as effective in conducting mundane tasks in the 30th hour as they are in the first."

General McKinley considered that, "This



E8-C JSTARS flown by the 116th Air Control Wing, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, a blended Air National Guard-Air Force organization, December 20, 2002. (Air Force Photo.)

new mission is extremely vital to the nation's defense."

While individual Guardsmen had been operating UAVs for years alongside active duty airmen, in November 2006 the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing, March Air Reserve Base, California, became the first ANG unit to fly them. Taking responsibility for unmanned aerial vehicles demonstrated another way in which the Air Guard used its new missions: the 163rd previously had been an air refueling wing. But the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Commission removed its KC-135 Stratotankers. Now the 163rd would fly its Predators to assist with firefighting strategy among other operations. The 163rd also took responsibility for training others in flying and maintaining Predators.

Because pilots and crews operated their UAVs remotely, "They can fly their missions over Iraq or Afghanistan, even hit the bad guys with a Hellfire missile, and then go home to coach their kids' soccer game that night," explained Air Guard Brigadier General Allison A. Hickey, Director of Total Force Integration at Headquarters, U.S. Air Force.

Space operations "provide a critical communications link to communities throughout the nation in the form of satellite support for everyday uses, television, computers, and wireless phones, but also serve as an important military deterrence from external threats." However, space-related missions were not really new to the National Guard. In 1961 Massachusetts' 267th Communications

Squadron technicians were assigned full time to nearby Hanscom Air Force Base to learn to handle special message traffic. That represented the earliest known involvement of an Air Guard unit in a military space mission. Three years later some enlisted Air National Guard technicians helped operate a satellite tracking station for the Air Defense Command's United States Air Force Space Tracking Service. Other members of the unit helped staff the communications center at the Space Tracking Research and Development Center at Hanscom. The Air Force inaugurated a formal Space Command in 1982 and the United States Space Command was established in 1985. In 1992 the Louisiana Air National Guard began developing the first ANG

unit devoted to space. Florida followed two years later with space launch support. Located at Canaveral Air Force Station, Florida, the 114th Range Flight provided launch support to the Air Force's 45th Space Wing.

The 137th Space Warning Squadron, Greeley, Colorado, became operational in 1995. The 137th provided critical, time-sensitive missile warning, space launch, and nuclear detonation data to the military and the president. In addition, it operated the Air Force's Survivable/Endurable Mobile Warning System, special communications, and provided threat data while deployed as well as on a 24 hour-a-day basis while at home.

On May 21, 2004, the Alaska Air National Guard's 213th Space Warning Squadron took over the operation of Clear Air Force Station, Alaska, which had been selected to become a completely Air National Guard facility. The installation's long range radar operated

fueling Wing, California, actually operated satellites. It commanded the \$31 billion Milstar satellite constellation, "the nation's top priority communications system." The 148th executed all operations including the satellites, ground control stations, and more than 1,500 worldwide user terminals. In addition, it conducted maintenance, training, standardization/evaluation, and supply for a space operations center.

While most space-related squadrons concerned the "final frontier," the 111th Space Operations Squadron was more earthbound. It used balloons, one of the oldest aerial surveillance techniques. Unlike their 19th century predecessors, those balloons could operate in near space, 65-90,000 feet above their home planet. Their Combat SkySat was launched by a two-to-three person team, and a two-person team, usually separated geographically, controlled the balloon. Unlike its tethered cousins,

(IO). According to Lieutenant Colonel Felipe Morales, head of Information Operations in the Space and Information Superiority Division:

"Information operations ... are the integrated employment of the capabilities of influence operations, electronic warfare operations, and network warfare operations ... to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own."

Colonel Donald R. Fick, head of the ANG's Plans, Programs, and Manpower organization, noted in 2001 that the ANG leadership was convinced that information warfare was key to the future of armed conflict and that the Air Guard was in a good position to recruit and retrain the high technology personnel who were critical to success in that mission area. According to a commentator in 2005, "In warfare, information is power, now more than ever. Those who control it have a distinct advantage at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war."

As with intelligence, information operations in all its forms was well-suited to the Guard. It could build upon critical skills possessed by active duty airmen returning to civilian life. But several Air Guard IO areas used skills not usually found in the Air Force. Therefore, those units tended to locate near information technology centers where they actively recruited civilians to become traditional Guardsmen. For example, the 262nd Information Warfare Aggressor Squadron, McChord Air Force Base, Washington State, was located near Microsoft headquarters where many of its traditional Guardsmen worked. Similarly, Maryland's 175th Information Operations Squadron supported the National Security Agency

"In warfare, information is power, now more than ever. Those who control it have a distinct advantage at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war."

all day, every day to provide tactical warning and attack assessment in case of a ballistic missile attack against North America. Permanently assigned Guardsmen ran the station for the first time in four decades. Previously, active duty Air Force personnel rotated through the remote site on one-year tours.

Unlike other space-mission components of the ANG, the 148th Space Operations Squadron in the 163rd Re-

the Combat SkySat moved with the wind, providing voice and data relays to Special Tactics Teams. The payload parachuted to the ground at the end of its six-to-eight hour flight.

Intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and space all involved warfare-related technology. Other aspects of information technology, along with psychological operations are subsumed under the title of Information Operations

and could draw upon the many high tech companies found in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area.

Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne in a Letter to Airmen of May 7, 2007, described how 21st century warfighting made these new missions so essential:

“Our adversaries ... attempt to access American industrial servers that contain sensitive data, exploit electromagnetic energy to try and jam or misdirect our precision weapons, and use radio transmitters to detonate improvised explosive devices, killing Americans, Coalition allies, and innocent civilians. In response to these threats, Airmen are actively ‘flying and fighting’ in cyberspace.”

Whether monitoring motion on the ground in JSTARS, vacuuming up electronic data or radio signals in Rivet Joints or Senior Scouts, airborne ANG crews used the new technologies to counteract American adversaries. Earthbound Air Guardsmen also used Distributed Ground Distribution Systems and unmanned aerial vehicles to collect intelligence and conduct surveillance. Moreover, their weaponized UAVs participated directly in warfighting missions. Meanwhile, the ANG supported missions in space and cyberspace.

Air National Guardsmen also continued with their longtime missions. Pilots and planes protected the homeland with 24 hour seven days a week runway alerts; civil engineers established bases to support combat overseas and following natural disasters at home; medical personnel deployed for emergencies and ongoing missions; and ANG refueling and airlift wings provided essential support for the airborne operations of the Air Force



Senior Airman Kevin A. Doyle, a Ground Operations Specialist from the 167th Air Wing, West Virginia Air National Guard, shakes hands with National Guard Bureau Chief, Lieutenant General H Steven Blum, during the General's visit to Naval Air Station, Joint Reserve Base, in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, September 9, 2005. (Photographer: SFC Chuck Joseph, West Virginia Air National Guard. Air Force Photo.)

and other services. Finally, Air National Guard fighters continued to augment and protect American and Coalition personnel engaged in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

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Senior Air Force leaders understood long before the 21st century that their service could not go to war or undertake major contingency operations without calling on the Air Guard and Reserve at the outset. In return the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve consistently met the service's pressing requirements for operational support that was not available in the active force. Governors as well understood the importance of having the Air National Guard available should a

disaster occur. In the 21st century, the Air Guard belied its “one weekend a month, two weeks a year” mantra as citizen airmen responded to increased natural disasters like hurricanes and forest fires while they prepared for the possibility of post-9/11 terrorism at home and participated in combat operations abroad. As Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General H Steven Blum noted, “The role and the responsibility of the National Guard is not going to diminish in the future; it's going to increase. *The use of the National Guard has been increasing every day in the last six and a half years.*” He estimated that 60,000 citizen soldiers and airmen contributed to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq every day. “I don't see any end in sight.”



Operated and maintained by the 148th Space Operations Squadron, California Air National Guard, the Milstar communications satellites link commanders with a variety of resources like ships, submarines, aircraft, land vehicles and manned-portable systems. It represents the Air National Guard's increasing involvement in space and cyberspace and high technology weapon systems. (Image courtesy of Air Force Space Command Office of History.)



Major E.G. "Buck" Shuler, a C-130 Hercules pilot for the 169th Operations Support Flight, 169th Fighter Wing, South Carolina Air National Guard, begins the descent into Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras as Lieutenant Colonel Scott Cain, the 169th Commander, concentrates on locating the runway. They are delivering much needed water purification units, food, and medical supplies to assist local civilians in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, January 4, 1999. (Camera Operator: MSgt Edward Snyder. Air Force Photo.)

